

**MANAGING DISCIPLINE IN A POST – CORPORAL PUNISHMENT
ERA ENVIRONMENT AT SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN THE
SEKHUKHUNE SCHOOL DISTRICT, LIMPOPO**

by

LESHELEBA TINY NTULI

submitted in accordance with the requirements for
the degree of

MASTER OF EDUCATION

in the subject

EDUCATION MANAGEMENT

at the

UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH AFRICA

SUPERVISOR: DR PR MACHAISA

NOVEMBER 2012

DECLARATION

I declare that **MANAGING DISCIPLINE IN A POST - CORPORAL PUNISHMENT ERA ENVIRONMENT AT SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN THE SEKHUKHUNE SCHOOL DISTRICT, LIMPOPO** is my own work and that all the sources I have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by means of complete references.

NTULI LESHELEBA TINY

DATE

DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to my mother Paulinah Maserufe Mamatshela Lefao, for she has provided me with an educational foundation and modelled a modus operandi for how to cope with challenges in life.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This work was made successful by the contributions, support and motivation from various persons. So, I find it imperative to convey my earnest gratitude to the following:

- Almighty God for giving me strength and wisdom to carry out the research.
- My supervisor, Dr P.R Machaisa for the support, guidance and patience she demonstrated throughout this research study.
- Dr Leonie Viljoen for editing the manuscript.
- Mr M.A Mabitla for providing guidance and advice.
- Mr T.G Nkadimeng, the Sekhukhune District Senior Manager, for granting me permission to pursue my research study.
- The principals of schools where the research was conducted for their warm welcome; for permitting me to freely conduct the research and for participating in the study.
- All educators in the four secondary schools for willingly participating in the research study and for meaningfully contributing towards the fulfilment of the research aim and objectives.
- My principal, Ncube Esther Ntombi, for understanding, words of encouragement and believing in me.

- My friends for encouraging and supporting me in times of difficulties.
- My husband, Mohlalekoana Petrus, and my children Nozipho, Thulisile, Sithembiso, Sibusiso and Thandani for their mammoth support and understanding when I had to work tirelessly and spend sleepless nights; and sometimes stay away from home.
- Lastly to my sister-in-law Rose and her family and my brother William for their support throughout this study.

ABSTRACT

Managing discipline in schools is one of the fundamentals of effective teaching and learning. It is evident that ineffective discipline management in schools would eventually jeopardize the efficacy of teaching and learning. So, it is crucial that legitimate, democratic disciplinary measures and procedures should be employed.

The aim of this study was to investigate ways of managing discipline in selected secondary schools within Sekhukhune District, Limpopo. A qualitative research approach was chosen, employing research methods which included individual interviews, focus group interviews and non-participant observation. The investigation focused on four secondary schools which were purposefully sampled to participate in the study. The research concentrated only on the views of the educators and the principals.

This investigation revealed that principals and educators still find themselves in a predicament in applying contemporary disciplinary measures due to a lack of training or minimal training regarding alternatives to corporal punishment.

KEYWORDS

Discipline

Punishment

Corporal punishment

Management

Classroom management

Secondary school

Self-discipline

Self-control

Code of conduct

Parental involvement

ABBREVIATIONS

GTM	Grounded Theory Methodology
RCL	Representative Council of Learners
SASA	South African Schools Act
SCO	Student Christian Organisation
SGB	School Governing Body
SMT	School Management Team

TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER ONE

1. ORIENTATION AND BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

1.1 INTRODUCTION	1
1.2 BACKGROUND	2
1.3 MOTIVATION AND RATIONALE FOR THE STUDY	4
1.4 PROBLEM STATEMENT	5
1.5 AIM AND OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY	5
1.5.1 Aim	5
1.5.2 Objectives	6
1.6 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY	6
1.7 CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK	7
1.7.1 Management	7
1.7.2 Discipline	8
1.7.3 Punishment	8
1.7.4 Corporal punishment	9
1.7.5 Classroom management	9

1.8 SCOPE OF THE STUDY	10
1.9 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY	11
1.9.1 Qualitative approach	11
1.9.2 Research methods	13
1.9.2.1 Literature study	13
1.9.2.2 Data collection methods	13
1.9.2.2.1 <i>Individual interviews</i>	14
1.9.2.2.2 <i>Focus group interviews</i>	14
1.9.2.2.3 Non-participant observation	15
1.9.2.3 Sampling	15
1.9.2.4 Data analysis methods	16
1.9.3. Ethical considerations	18
1.9.3.1 Informed consent and permission	18
1.9.3.2 Privacy, confidentiality and anonymity	19
1.10 CHAPTER DIVISION	19
1.11 SUMMARY	20

CHAPTER TWO

2. MANAGING DISCIPLINE IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS

2.1 INTRODUCTION	22
2.2 CORPORAL PUNISHMENT	23
2.3 THE PURPOSE OF DISCIPLINE IN SCHOOLS	25
2.3.1 Discipline as a corrective measure	25
2.3.2 Establishing order	26
2.3.3 Encouraging self discipline and accountability	26
2.3.4 Ensuring safety and support	27
2.3.5 Encouraging compliance and cooperation	28
2.4 THE LEGISLATIVE FRAMEWORK	28
2.4.1 National legislation	28
2.4.1.1 The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa	29
2.4.1.2 The South African Schools Act	30
2.4.1.3 The National Education Policy Act	30
2.4.2 International legislation	30

2.4.2.1 Convention on the Rights of the Child	31
2.4.2.2 African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child	31
2.5 THE ALTERNATIVES TO CORPORAL PUNISHMENT	32
2.6 THE IMPACT OF THE ABOLITION OF CORPORAL PUNISHMENT ON SCHOOL DISCIPLINE	34
2.7 FACTORS CONTRIBUTING TOWARDS DISCIPLINARY PROBLEMS IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS	36
2.7.1 Insufficient training on alternative methods of discipline	36
2.7.2 Poor educator – learner relationships	37
2.7.3 Lack of parental involvement	38
2.7.4 Poor communication between the school and home	38
2.7.5 Poor parent - child relationships	39
2.8 MANAGING DISCIPLINE IN SCHOOLS	40
2.8.1 Promoting positive behaviour in schools	41
2.8.2 Reducing disciplinary problems in schools	44
2.8.2.1 <i>Code of conduct for learners</i>	44
2.8.2.2 <i>Creating a safe environment</i>	46

2.8.2.3	<i>Classroom management</i>	47
2.8.2.4	<i>Educator – learner relationship</i>	49
2.8.2.5	<i>Good curriculum</i>	50
2.8.2.6	<i>Parental involvement</i>	51
2.8.3	Alternative methods to corporal punishment	54
2.9	THE IMPACT OF POOR DISCIPLINE ON LEARNER PERFORMANCE	61
2.10	THE ROLE OF EDUCATORS IN MANAGING DISCIPLINE	62
2.11	THE ROLE OF THE PRINCIPAL IN MANAGING DISCIPLINE	64
2.12	THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK	65
2.13	SUMMARY	67

CHAPTER THREE

3. RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

3.1	INTRODUCTION	69
3.2	RESEARCH DESIGN	69

3.2.1 Qualitative approach	69
3.2.2 Characteristics of a qualitative research approach	71
3.3 RESEARCH METHODS	74
3.3.1 Literature review	74
3.3.2 Interviews	77
3.3.2.1 <i>Individual interviews</i>	79
3.3.2.2 <i>Focus group interviews</i>	79
3.3.3 Non-participant observation	80
3.4 TRIANGULATION	81
3.5 SAMPLING	81
3.6 DATA ANALYSIS	83
3.7 ETHICAL CONSIDERATION	87
3.7.1 Informed consent and permission	87
3.7.2 Privacy, confidentiality and anonymity	88
3.8 RELIABILITY	89
3.9 VALIDITY	90
3.10 SUMMARY	92

CHAPTER FOUR

4. FINDINGS OF THE EMPIRICAL RESEARCH

4.1 INTRODUCTION	93
4.2 RESPONDENTS' PERCEPTIONS ON ALTERNATIVES TO CORPORAL PUNISHMENT	93
4.2.1 Educators' perceptions on alternatives to corporal punishment	93
4.2.2 Principals' perceptions on alternatives to corporal punishment	95
4.3 DISCIPLINARY PROBLEMS IN SECONDARY SCHOOL	96
4.3.1 Disciplinary problems experienced by schools	96
4.3.1.1 <i>Late coming</i>	97
4.3.1.2 <i>Absenteeism</i>	97
4.3.1.3 <i>Neglect of academic work</i>	98
4.3.1.4 <i>Possession of cell phones at school</i>	98
4.3.1.5 <i>Illegal substances</i>	98
4.3.1.6 <i>Illegal objects</i>	99
4.3.1.7 <i>Bunking classes</i>	99

4.3.1.8 <i>Not adhering to dress codes</i>	100
4.3.1.9 <i>Bullying</i>	100
4.3.1.10 <i>Teenage pregnancy</i>	100
4.3.1.11 <i>Insolence</i>	101
4.4 CAUSES OF INEFFECTIVE DISCIPLINE IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS	102
4.4.1 Unsystematic abolition of corporal punishment	102
4.4.2 Insufficient formal training	103
4.4.3 Lack of parental involvement	105
4.4.4 Societal problems	106
4.4.5 Evading responsibility	107
4.4.6 Underperforming learners	109
4.4.7 Outweighing of rights	110
4.5 DISCIPLINARY MEASURES	111
4.5.1 Methods employed as disciplinary measures	111
4.5.2 Effective methods of discipline	112
4.5.3 Ineffective methods of discipline	114

4.6 REDUCING DISCIPLINARY PROBLEMS AT SECONDARY SCHOOLS	116
4.6.1 Code of Conduct	116
4.6.2 Promoting positive behaviour	119
4.6.3 Self control and self discipline	122
4.6.4 Educator-learner relationships	124
4.6.5 School-home relationships	126
4.6.6 Good communication amongst all stakeholders	127
4.6.7 Proper security	129
4.6.8 Incorporation of sports into the curriculum	132
4.7 ROLES OF VARIOUS STRUCTURES IN MANAGING DISCIPLINE WITHIN THE SCHOOL	134
4.7.1 Educators' roles on learner discipline	134
4.7.2 Principals' roles on learner discipline	136
4.7.3 Roles of the disciplinary committee	139
4.8 SUMMARY	140

CHAPTER FIVE

5. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 INTRODUCTION	142
5.2 GENERAL CONCLUSIONS	142
5.2.1 Importance of school discipline	143
5.2.2 Respondents' perceptions on alternatives to corporal punishment	144
5.2.3 Positive practices of managing discipline	146
5.2.4 Possible or suggested strategies that can promote positive behaviour in schools	148
5.3 RECOMMENDATIONS TO IMPROVE DISCIPLINE MANAGEMENT IN SCHOOLS	150
5.4 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH	153
5.5 SUMMARY	154
5.6 CONCLUDING REMARKS	154

REFERENCES	156
APPENDIX A: INFORMED CONSENT	166
APPENDIX B: INTERVIEW SCHEDULE FOR EDUCATORS	168
APPENDIX C: INTERVIEW SCHEDULE FOR PRINCIPALS	170
APPENDIX D: PERMISSION LETTER TO THE DISTRICT	172
APPENDIX E: PERMISSION LETTER TO SCHOOLS	174
APPENDIX F: PERMISSION LETTER FROM THE DISTRICT	176

CHAPTER ONE

1. ORIENTATION AND BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

1.1 INTRODUCTION

School discipline is vital for effective teaching and learning. School discipline is a form of discipline appropriate for highlighting rules and regulations for learners and ensuring order in schools. The aim of school discipline is to create a safe and happy learning environment within the school. Discipline at school has two very important goals, namely to create an environment conducive to learning and teaching; and to ensure the safety of staff and learners (Joubert, De Waal & Rossouw 2005:208). Gaustad (1991:17) also confirms that the safety of learners and staff must come first. In a classroom where an educator is unable to maintain order and discipline, learners may become unmotivated and distressed, and the climate for learning is diminished, leading to underachievement (Hill & Hill 1994:16). The authors further indicate that learners learn to the best of their abilities in an orderly and safe environment. Therefore management of discipline in schools is central to effective teaching and learning. If teachers are unable to manage a class, they will be unable to teach (Blandford 1998:9); so there is a need for schools to maintain a disciplined environment that is safe and secure for all learners and educators.

Before 1994 the most common form of school discipline was corporal punishment but now things have changed. The South African Schools Act 84 of 1996 (Section 10) prohibits the administration of corporal punishment. Since the banning of corporal punishment most public schools have been unable to manage discipline. Some educators still prefer to use corporal

punishment even though it has been abolished. By administering corporal punishment educators are infringing the rights of the learners, according to Chapter 2 of the Constitution (Sections 10 & 12), so positive discipline which is constructive and rights-based should be emphasised. The problem is: How can this paradigm shift be addressed, whereby positive and good discipline is emphasised and employed by all educators?

Discipline in public schools continues to be a burning issue for all stakeholders, that is, parents, school governing bodies, educators and principals. Creating and maintaining a safe, disciplined school environment is one of the important challenges facing principals, educators and parents in schools (Squelch 2000:iii). All stakeholders (school managers, educators, school governing bodies and parents) should be taken on board in managing discipline in schools. According to section 8 of the South African Schools Act (84 of 1996) a governing body of a public school must adopt a Code of Conduct. The Government Gazette (no.18900 of 15 May 1998) sets out guidelines for the consideration of governing bodies in adopting a code of conduct for learners. School governing body must adopt a code of conduct which is aimed at managing discipline within the school. Learners should also not be simply regarded as receivers of information. Their potential to make diverse contributions to reach shared aims must be recognised as Wagner (1992: 56) stated that there are many contributions that can be made by learners; e.g. support for school policies.

1.2 BACKGROUND TO THE PROBLEM

Since the banning of corporal punishment in schools under the South African Schools Act (84 of 1996), lack of discipline and safety in schools has become one of the major challenges in South Africa. It has become increasingly difficult for educators to

ensure discipline in schools (Maphosa and Shumba 2010:397). Many principals and educators find it increasingly difficult to maintain discipline in schools in the wake of the new education legislations that regulate discipline and punishment in schools (Squelch 2000:iii). The banning of corporal punishment in schools demands that new methods of discipline be employed to protect the rights of learners (Squelch 2000:iii). However, educators feel that alternative disciplinary measures to corporal punishment are not effective (Maphosa and Shumba 2010:397).

According to *Alternatives to Corporal Punishment* (Department of Education 2000), corporal punishment is against the law. The document outlines the legislation banning corporal punishment. It also states the alternatives to corporal punishment as well as appropriate disciplinary measures and procedures. The South African Constitution (section 12) states that: “everyone has the right not to be treated or punished in a cruel, inhuman or degrading way”. The National Education Policy Act (27 of 1996) also stipulates that: “no person shall administer corporal punishment or subject a student to physical abuse at any educational institution.” The South African Schools Act (SASA) (84 of 1996) states that: (1) “no person may administer corporal punishment at a school to a learner; (2) any person who contravenes subsection 1 is guilty of an offence and liable on conviction to a sentence which could be imposed for assault”. This leaves schools with the responsibility of identifying and implementing alternative disciplinary practices and procedures (Department of Education 2000). It means that educators should refrain from discipline which is punitive and punishment-oriented. The management of discipline therefore calls on educators to make children feel emotionally comfortable and physically safe so that they (learners) can develop self-discipline (intrinsic discipline) and accountability in their actions (Mokhele 2006:151).

1.3 MOTIVATION AND RATIONALE FOR THE STUDY

It is evident that principals and educators have a problem in managing discipline in schools. This study intends to assist them to be aware of different methods of managing discipline without infringing learners' rights. As a member of the school management team in my school and a member of the school governing body in my children' schools, I have been working with educators and parents of various schools. In the process I have realised that principals and educators still have a problem in managing discipline in their schools. They are aware that corporal punishment in schools is outlawed by the South African Constitution (section 12), the South African Schools Act (84 of 1996) and the National Education Policy Act (27 of 1996). Educators find themselves in a predicament due to ineffective methods or strategies provided by the Department of Education. As Maphosa and Shumba (2010:397) indicate, educators feel that alternative disciplinary measures to corporal punishment are not effective. Some educators are not even aware that there are alternatives to corporal punishment provided for them to employ; due to minimal and sporadic training on alternatives to corporal punishment (Le Roux 2005:7). The study intends to change their attitudes and perceptions towards alternatives to corporal punishment to some degree.

As a researcher I find it crucial to investigate strategies which educators and principals can employ in managing discipline in schools in order to capacitate them. Perhaps educators will be persuaded to employ the relevant disciplinary measures to allow effective learning and teaching without hesitation.

1.4 PROBLEM STATEMENT

Since the banning of corporal punishment in all schools under the South African Schools Act (84 of 1996) discipline has become a major problem affecting many schools in South Africa. The problem contributes negatively towards effective teaching and learning; and this may lead to poor learner performance in schools. Masitsa (2008:234) states that poor discipline impacts negatively on learners' academic performance. Managing discipline in schools is therefore of the outmost importance to allow effective teaching and learning.

The main research question which needed to be addressed is:

How can secondary schools in Sekhukhune district manage discipline in a post-corporal punishment environment?

The sub-questions related to the main research question are:

- What positive discipline practices are used in secondary schools within Sekhukhune district?
- What role can educators and the principal play in the management of discipline in secondary schools within Sekhukhune district?
- How can schools manage discipline without violating the rights of learners in secondary schools within Sekhukhune district?

1.5 AIM AND OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1.5.1 Aim

The aim of the research is:

To investigate ways of managing discipline in secondary schools within Sekhukhune district in a post-corporal punishment environment.

1.5.2 Objectives

The following objectives for this research were identified:

- To identify positive discipline practices in secondary schools within Sekhukhune district.
- To investigate the roles of educators and the principal in the management of discipline in secondary schools within Sekhukhune district.
- To investigate ways of managing discipline within a human rights framework.

1.6 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

The investigation intended to provide suggestions and recommendations that would hopefully change educators' and principals' attitude towards the management of discipline. The investigation intended to highlight various positive methods or strategies which educators and principals can adopt to manage discipline effectively in the absence of corporal punishment. Hopefully this study may serve as a wake-up call to educators to avoid discipline which is punitive and punishment-oriented. The study also intended to make educators aware of repercussions of administering corporal punishment. The roles of educators and principals in the management of discipline were also highlighted. The investigation also provided recommendations for policies which are in place.

1.7 CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

To determine what is relevant to the field of study and what not, a conceptual analysis was done with regard to the following concepts: management, discipline, punishment, corporal punishment and classroom management.

1.7.1 Management

According to Joubert and Bray (2007:19), the concept of **management** characterises the process of leading and directing all or part of an organisation, often a business, through the deployment and manipulation of resources (human, financial, material, intellectual or intangible). In this study management refers to handling or controlling discipline successfully and effectively. The concept refers to how principals and educators will execute their task of handling or controlling discipline in schools. In this regard Van der Westhuizen (1991:55) states that management refers to a specific type of work in education which comprises those regulative tasks or actions executed by a person or body in a position of authority in a specific field or area of regulation, so as to allow formative education to take place.

According to Van Schalkwyk (1986:4), managing includes organising, leading, motivating, planning, controlling and determining programmes, procedures and methods. In this research study the concept management also refers to how educators and principals plan to eradicate disciplinary problems in their schools. Blandford (1998:37) indicates that effective management of discipline does not just happen; it requires consultation, planning, commitment and constant review and evaluation. Management relates to where the school is going and why, how it is going to get there and then checking very carefully to see if and when it has arrived (Blandford 1998:38).

1.7.2 Discipline

According to the Walsh (1991:17) the concept of **discipline** is defined as the primary process by which the children of all cultures develop the vital morals, values, and attitudes of the culture they inherit. Discipline is defined as behaviour by parents in response to and intended to correct misbehaviour by the child (Douglas & Straus 2007:304). Papalia, Wendkos-Olds and Duskin-feldman (2006) refer to discipline as methods of modelling character and of teaching self-control and acceptable behaviour. According to Le Mottee (2005:5), discipline has nothing to do with controlling disruptive or other unacceptable behaviour but with ensuring a “safe and valuing environment so that the rights and needs of people are respected, vindicated and safeguarded”.

In this study the concept discipline refers to how educators and principals ensure a safe and conducive environment for teaching and learning so that the rights and needs of learners and educators are respected, vindicated and safeguarded with the intention of managing discipline. Discipline refers to positive behaviour management aimed at promoting appropriate behaviour and developing self-discipline and self-control (Squelch, 2000:2).

1.7.3 Punishment

The concept **punishment** is defined as “a corrective measure or a penalty inflicted on an offender who has to suffer the consequences of misconduct in order to maintain the orderly society of the school” (Republic of South Africa) 1998d, par 8.1). Le Mottee (2005:2) maintains that punishment is external, punitive and the exercise of control over people for the sake of compliance. Rogers (1998:11) regards punishment as a form of discipline.

In this study the concept punishment refers to a corrective measure; a facet of discipline that involves action taken by educators or principals in response to inappropriate behaviour in order to correct or modify behaviour and to restore harmonious relations (Joubert, De Waal & Rossouw 2005:209).

1.7.4 Corporal punishment

Corporal punishment can be defined as “any deliberate act against a child that inflicts pain or physical discomfort to punish or contain him/her” (Department of Education 2000:6). Soneson (2005:6) defines corporal punishment as “hitting the child with the hand or with an object (such as a cane, belt, whip, shoe, etc.); kicking, shaking, or throwing the child, pinching or pulling their hair, forcing a child to stay in uncomfortable or undignified positions, or to take excessive physical exercise; burning or scarring the child”.

In this study the concept corporal punishment refers to physical punishment, especially by hitting. It also refers to the way educators and principals use inhumane measures to punish learners.

1.7.5 Classroom management

According to Kruger (1996:39), the concept **classroom management** can be defined as a means to the effective execution of the educational and teaching tasks of the teacher. Calitz (1987, cited in Kruger 1996:39) describes classroom management as those managerial activities of the teacher that not only make effective instruction and learning in the classroom possible, but can also take place concurrently with the instruction.

In this study the concept classroom management refers to the process that educators engage to ensure that classroom lessons run smoothly despite disruptive behaviour by learners and also implies the prevention of disruptive behaviour.

Clarification of concepts is crucial since it assists the researcher to explain the way people think about the phenomenon under study. Conceptual analysis brings conceptual clarity (Mouton 2008:175). The researcher further asserts that well-structured conceptual analysis makes conceptual categories clear, explicates theoretical linkages and reveals the conceptual implications of different viewpoints.

1.8 SCOPE OF THE STUDY

The problem of discipline is affecting most schools in South Africa but this research project was conducted within Sekhukhune District in Limpopo Province. The investigation focused on disciplinary problems in public secondary schools. Four secondary schools were selected for this investigation by means of purposeful sampling strategies. The purposive selection was based on their results. The schools were selected as follows: two secondary schools with good grade 12 results and two secondary schools with poor grade 12 results. It is believed that in schools which produce better results, effective teaching and learning is taking place due to good discipline, while poor results are the end products of ineffective teaching and learning resulting from poor discipline. The schools with disciplinary problems are unlikely to produce good results.

The selected schools represented schools with good discipline as well as those with disciplinary problems. The research will be of great importance to other secondary schools that are experiencing disciplinary problems throughout South Africa.

1.9 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

1.9.1 Qualitative approach

A qualitative research approach was chosen for this study. Qualitative research describes and analyses people's individual and collective social actions, beliefs, thoughts, and perceptions (McMillan & Schumacher 2006:315). Qualitative approaches are used when the researcher aims to understand human phenomena and investigates the meaning that people give to events they experience. McMillan and Schumacher (2006:12) confirm this, stating that qualitative research is more concerned with understanding the social phenomenon from the participants' perspectives. According to Babbie and Mouton (2010:270), qualitative research is characterised by the following features:

- Research is conducted in the natural setting of social actors.
- A focus on process rather than outcome.
- The actor's perspective (the "insider" or "emic" view) is emphasised.
- The primary aim is in-depth ("thick") descriptions and understanding of actions and events.
- The main concern is to understand social action in terms of its specific context (ideographic motive) rather than attempting to generalise to some theoretical population.
- The research process is often inductive in its approach, resulting in the generation of new hypotheses and theories.
- The qualitative researcher is seen as the "main instrument" in the research process.

In this research project this approach was used for the following reasons:

Data was collected in face-to-face situations by interacting with selected persons in their natural settings (e.g. conducting interviews) as supported by McMillan and Schumacher (2006: 315). The researcher personally visited selected schools to collect data and interact with selected persons. In this research study the collected data was presented in the form of words.

In qualitative research the investigator usually works with a wealth of rich descriptive data, collected through methods such as participant observation, in-depth interviewing and document analysis (Mouton 1996:169). In this type of research, researchers tend to keep field notes as they participate in the fieldwork often in natural field settings (Mouton 2008:107). Qualitative research is interactive, face-to-face research, which requires a relatively extensive amount of time to interview, systematically observe, and record processes as they occur naturally (McMillan & Schumacher 2006:340). In qualitative research the natural and subjective components of the sample are emphasised. It is for this reason that qualitative research is also referred to as naturalistic research (Mouton 1996:130).

In this study, a qualitative approach was chosen to explore the behaviour, beliefs, perceptions and experiences of the participants regarding the management of school discipline in the absence of corporal punishment. The researcher aimed to understand human phenomena and investigate the meaning that people give to events they experience. This view is supported by Fouché and Delport (2003: 79), who argue that the qualitative approach aims mainly to understand social phenomena and the meaning that people attach to everyday life. Therefore, the qualitative research approach enabled the researcher to understand the social phenomenon from the participants' perspectives.

The research strategy is usually of a contextual nature. This implies focus on the individual case (or small number of cases) in its specific context of meanings and significance (Mouton 1996:169). Since a qualitative approach was chosen for this research project, the focus was on a limited number of individuals, not a large number of people as in quantitative approach.

1.9.2 Research methods

1.9.2.1 Literature study

Literature relevant to the topic was consulted, for instance dissertations, theses, journal articles and other sources, to acquire knowledge pertaining to school discipline (management and maintenance of discipline in schools). A review of literature was used to document the importance of the topic. A qualitative review simply introduces the purpose of the study and the initial broad questions that will be reformulated during data collection (McMillan & Schumacher 2006:92). Both primary and secondary literature was studied in order to establish what other scholars have already gathered with regard to the topic. This is in accordance with Mouton's (2008:87) stipulation that "you should start with a review of the existing scholarship or available body of knowledge to see how other scholars have investigated the research problem that you are interested in".

1.9.2.2 Data collection methods

The qualitative researcher is able to use a variety of techniques for gathering information. In this research study the researcher used individual interviews, focus group interviews and nonparticipant observation.

1.9.2.2.1 Individual interviews

In-depth individual interviews consist of open-response questions to obtain data of participant meanings – how individuals conceive of their world and how they explain or make sense of the important events in their lives (McMillan & Schumacher 2006:350). The in-depth interviews were conducted with individual persons selected in particular schools to understand their life experiences regarding school discipline in the absence of corporal punishment, as expressed in their own words. Ragin and Amoroso (2011:122) also concur that a researcher conducts interviews to hear how people in the research setting make sense of their lives, work, and relationships.

1.9.2.2.2 Focus group interviews

Focus group interviews were used to obtain a better understanding of the problem. In focus group interviews, participants discussed how discipline has been managed in their schools since the abolition of corporal punishment. They also discussed methods which they find useful in managing discipline. Participants were selected because they had certain characteristics in common that relate to the topic of the focus group (Greeff 2003:305), so the interaction with the group would therefore lead to data and outcome. I facilitated the interviews to ensure that participants had something to say and felt comfortable to say it. Focus group interviews were used to empower participants to speak out, and in their own words. I also ensured that sensitive questions were avoided to allow them to participate freely without any fear.

The participants interacted with each other rather than with me as the interviewer, such that the views of the participants could emerge and the interaction with the group would lead to data and

outcomes (Cohen, Manion & Morrison 2008:376). McMillan and Schumacher (2006:360) state that by creating a social environment in which group members are stimulated by one another's perceptions and ideas, the researcher can increase the quality and richness of data through a more efficient strategy than by means of one-on-one interviewing. Collective views on the management of discipline were gathered through the focus group interviews.

1.9.2.2.3 Non-participant observation

As a researcher I remained an outside (non-participant) observer. Observation is a way for the researcher to see and hear what is occurring naturally in the research site (McMillan & Schumacher 2010: 350). In this research project, I collected the data by observing the situation as it occurred: for example, participants' body language, facial expressions, and tone of voice were observed and recorded during the interviews to assist in analysing the verbal data. I used this tool to verify some data that was provided during interviews with principals and teachers.

1.9.2.3 Sampling

Theoretical / purposeful sampling was used in this study by means of which four public secondary schools were purposefully sampled. Four principals and 24 educators (six educators from each school) of secondary schools within Sekhukhune district were selected. Principals and educators were appropriate as the research was concerned with alternative ways of managing discipline in the absence of corporal punishment. McMillan and Schumacher (2010:326) state that researchers search for information-rich key informants, groups, places or events to study; and these samples are chosen because they are likely to be knowledgeable and informative about the phenomena the researcher is investigating. On the basis of the above statement,

principals and educators were chosen for the purpose of this research study because they have in-depth knowledge about school discipline and are involved daily in the issue of discipline.

Four public secondary schools were purposefully selected for this investigation: two schools with good grade 12 results and two with poor grade 12 results for the past five years. Four focus group interviews consisting of six participants were conducted (six educators from each school). Four individual interviews were conducted. All principals of the sampled schools formed part of the individual interviews. In total, 28 respondents participated in the study.

1.9.2.4 Data analysis methods

De Vos (2003:339) explains that data analysis is the process of bringing order, structure and meaning to the mass of collected data. Therefore, qualitative data analysis in this study involved organising, accounting for and explaining the data; in short, making sense of the data in terms of participants' definitions of the situation, noting patterns, themes, categories and regularities.

During and after the process of data collection I identified and listed the categories and reduced them into themes, as data analysis involves "breaking up" the data into manageable themes, trends and relationships. This is in accordance with McMillan and Schumacher's (2006:364) argument that qualitative data analysis is primarily an inductive process of organising data into categories and identifying patterns (i.e. relationships) among the categories. As the researcher I coded, categorised, and interpreted the data to provide explanations of a single phenomenon of interest.

McMillan and Schumacher (2010:369) identify five steps for qualitative data analysis. These are:

(a) Data organisation

In this phase data collected during interviews is organised and analysed later. Organising the data separates it into a few workable units. The interview responses were organised separately to be compared later in the process.

(b) Data transcription

I transcribed data collected during interviews and observations to convert it into a format that would facilitate analysis.

(c) Coding

Data coding begins by identifying small pieces of data that stand alone. These data parts, called segments, divide the dataset. Segments are then analysed to come up with codes so that each segment is labelled by at least one code (some segments have more than one code). In this phase data needs to be coded to provide meaning to the segment for easy interpretation.

(d) Forming categories / themes

Categories are entities comprised of grouped codes. A single category is used to give meaning to codes that are combined. The researcher divides data collected into categories as data analysis involves “breaking up” the data into manageable themes, trends and relationships; to show similarities and dissimilarities for easy identification.

(e) Discovering patterns

A pattern is a relationship among categories. In searching for patterns, researchers try to understand the complex links among various aspects of people’s situations, mental processes, beliefs, and actions. The major pattern(s) serves as the framework for reporting the findings and organising the reports. The patterns

assisted me to consider what is really important and meaningful in the data.

These steps served as a guideline for my research project.

1.9.3 Ethical considerations

The domain of research ethics is concerned with protection of the rights and interest of research participants (Mouton 1996:42). According to McMillan and Schumacher (2006:16) the researcher is ethically responsible for protecting the rights and welfare of the subjects who participate in a study, which involves issues of physical and mental discomfort, harm, and danger. Therefore, the researcher should ensure that the planned research is ethically accountable, that is, that it conforms to acceptable norms and values. The researcher should also ensure the protection of the rights and welfare of the participants. The following research ethics were taken into account in this study:

1.9.3.1 Informed consent and permission

According to Ragin and Amoroso (2011:89), to prove that individuals are entering research studies voluntarily and adequately informed, researchers are often required to obtain informed consent from all participants or the participants' legally authorized representatives. Furthermore, to obtain informed consent, researchers must clearly communicate the research procedure, purposes, risks, and benefits to the participants in "jargon-free" language. Also, researchers must clearly communicate that participation is voluntary and that the participant can withdraw at any time.

Using the above outlined facts as a guideline, I obtained permission to conduct the research from the Department of Education at district level and from the individual participants. In gaining permission I gave participants assurances of

confidentiality and anonymity and described the intended use of the data. The participants also completed and signed informed consent forms as proof that they had been informed of the study details.

1.9.3.2 Privacy, confidentiality and anonymity

Privacy of research participants must be protected (McMillan & Schumacher 2010:121). The authors further mention that access to participants' characteristics, responses, behaviour, and other information is restricted to the researcher. So privacy is ensured by applying three practices: anonymity, confidentiality and appropriate storing of data.

As the researcher I ensured that the information provided by participants in no way revealed their identity, as supported by Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2008:64). I assured the participants that they would remain anonymous. Data collected would definitely not be linked to participants' names. Confidential information would be treated as such. The researcher would allow no-one access the collected data or the names of participants. The participant's right to privacy would be respected and protected by also informing them that they had the right to refuse to take part in the research; to limit time needed for participation; to refuse to answer any questions and not to be interviewed during mealtimes or at night.

1.10 CHAPTER DIVISION

Chapter 1

This chapter provides an orientation to the research. It contains the background and motivation of the study, the problem statement, aims of the study, significance of the study,

explanation of the main concepts, scope of the study, demarcation of the field of investigation and methods of study.

Chapter 2

The chapter provides a review of literature on school discipline and the management of discipline in secondary schools. It outlines what literature reveals about the maintenance and management of discipline; and the impact of the ban on corporal punishment on the management of discipline in secondary schools.

Chapter 3

This chapter will be used to describe research design and methods. The research design and methodology will be dealt with in detail, for example the selection of participants, data collection and data analysis procedures.

Chapter 4

Chapter 4 will provide the results and the findings of the empirical investigation. It will also be used for data analysis and interpretation.

Chapter 5

The summary, conclusion and recommendations will be outlined in this chapter.

1.11 SUMMARY

In this chapter the background, motivation, significance and scope of the study were outlined. The problem statement, research

questions, aims and objectives were addressed. The chapter also contains the explanation of the main concepts, the chapters which will be included in the study and the research methodology.

The banning of corporal punishment in schools has led to a myriad of disciplinary problems in schools. Therefore, it becomes crucial that schools come up with legitimate strategies to manage discipline. Moreover, management of discipline is central to effective teaching and learning.

A review of literature on the management of discipline in schools will be discussed in chapter 2.

CHAPTER TWO

2. MANAGING DISCIPLINE IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS

2.1 INTRODUCTION

In the previous chapter an overview of the study was presented. The background, motivation, significance and scope of the study were outlined. The problem statement, research questions, aims and objectives of the study were also addressed. Finally, the research design and methodology were briefly discussed.

In this chapter, I present a review of literature relevant to the topic of discipline in schools, for instance dissertations, theses, journals and other sources. The purpose of this review of literature was to document the importance of the topic. A qualitative review simply introduces the purpose of the study and the initial broad questions that are to be reformulated during data collection (McMillan & Schumacher 2006:92). Both primary and secondary literature was studied in order to establish what other scholars have already gathered with regard to the research topic. Mouton (2008:87) contends that “you should start with a review of the existing scholarship or available body of knowledge to see how other scholars have investigated the research problem that you are interested in”.

2.2 CORPORAL PUNISHMENT

Corporal punishment can be defined as *“any deliberate act against a child that inflicts pain or physical discomfort to punish or contain him/her”* (Department of Education 2000:6). Soneson (2005:6) defines corporal punishment as “hitting the child with the hand or with an object (such as a cane, belt, whip, shoe, etc.); kicking, shaking, or throwing the child, pinching or pulling their hair, forcing a child to stay in uncomfortable or undignified positions, or to take excessive physical exercise; burning or scarring the child”.

Corporal punishment was part of a bigger picture of an authoritarian approach to managing the school environment which was based on the view that children need to be controlled by adults and that measures such as sarcasm, shouting and other abusive forms of behaviour were ways of teaching children a lesson or ensuring that they were so afraid that they never stepped out of line (Department of Education 2000:9).

Extensive research shows that corporal punishment does not achieve the desired end – a culture of learning and discipline in the classroom (Department of Education 2000:7). As stipulated by the Department of Education (2000:7), key research findings show that corporal punishment:

- does not build a culture of human rights, tolerance and respect.
- does not stop bad behaviour of difficult children. Instead, these children are punished over and over again for the same offenses.

- does not nurture self-discipline in children. Instead, it provokes aggression and feelings of revenge and leads to anti-social behaviour.
- does not make children feel responsible for their own actions. They worry about being caught, not about personal responsibilities. This undermines the growth of self-discipline in children.
- takes the children's focus away from the wrongdoing committed to the act of beating itself. Some learners brag about being beaten as something to be proud of, as a badge of bravery or success.
- undermines a caring relationship between the learner and the educator, which is critical for the development of all learners, particularly those with behavioural difficulties.
- undermines the self-esteem and confidence of children who have learning or behavioural problems and/or difficult home circumstances and contributes to negative feelings about school.
- stands in the way of proper communication between the educator and the learner and therefore hides the real problems behind misconduct which needs to be tackled, such as trauma, poverty-related problems and conflict at home.
- is an excuse for educators not to find more constructive approaches to discipline in the classroom and therefore reinforces bad or lazy teaching practices.
- has been shown to contribute to truancy and high drop-out rates in South African schools.
- is usually used by educators in a prejudiced way. Those learners who are usually beaten most tend to be older than their peers, from poor homes, black rather than white, boys rather than girls.
- helps accelerate difficult or rebellious learners down a path of violence and gangsterism.

Le Mottee (2005:3) further postulates that corporal punishment includes, but is not limited to, spanking, slapping, pinching, paddling or hitting a child with a hand or with an object; denying or restricting a child's use of the toilet; denying meals, drink, heat and shelter, pushing or pulling a child with force, forcing the child to do exercise..."According to Le Mottee, corporal punishment does not achieve the desired culture of learning because violence begets violence.

According to Straus (2000:1110), corporal punishment is defined as the use of physical force with the intention of causing a child to experience pain, but not injury, for the purpose of correction or control of the child's behaviour. Straus further indicates that this includes spanking on the buttocks and slapping a child's hand for touching a forbidden or dangerous object.

2.3 THE PURPOSE OF DISCIPLINE IN SCHOOLS

2.3.1 Discipline as a corrective measure

Discipline should be thought of as a means of teaching learners to take positive charge of their lives (Charles 2007:15). Charles further asserts that good discipline shows learners what they have done wrong; has them assume ownership of the problem that has resulted; and teaches them ways to solve the problem; all the while leaving their personal dignity intact. The purpose of discipline should be constructive rather than destructive. The Department of Education (2000:24) asserts that the aim of discipline should be educative and nurture values of tolerance, respect and self discipline in the learner rather than victimise, seek revenge or belittle him/her. Discipline also aims at establishing order; encouraging self-discipline and accountability; ensuring safety and support; and encouraging compliance and cooperation.

2.3.2 Establishing order

According to Porter (2004:22), the purpose of discipline is a largely managerial one of creating order. Establishing order in a school is essential for effective teaching and learning. Learners learn most successfully in an orderly, well-organised environment. Mtsweni (2008:28) concurs, stating that discipline is necessary for maintaining order and harmony in the classroom situation. The author further asserts that learners learn best in an orderly and safe environment. Porter (2004:5) postulates that the first goal of the various approaches to school discipline is to establish and maintain order as well as creating an environment in which learning is not only possible, but probable. Therefore order and discipline are essential to an effective, educational environment (Goodman 2006:215). Discipline is considered to be educative in nature rather than punitive. Masitsa (2008:244) comments that discipline is part of an educative order.

2.3.3 Encouraging self-discipline and accountability

Discipline is educative in nature; therefore, it equips learners with the ability to motivate themselves. Discipline is about positive behaviour management aimed at promoting appropriate behaviour and developing self-discipline and self-control in learners (Squelch 2000:2). Discipline assists learners to acquire positive characteristics such as self-control, self-discipline and persistence (Mtsweni 2008:27). The more they acquire the sense of self-discipline, the more they become accountable without any pressure from anyone.

Mokhele (2006:151) maintains that discipline assists learners to develop self-discipline (intrinsic discipline) and accountability in their actions. Furthermore discipline assists learners to experience educative, corrective approaches in which they learn

to exercise self-control, respect others and accept the consequences of their actions (Department of Education 2000:9). Therefore a classroom climate based on mutual respect within which learners feel safe and affirmed will decrease the need for disciplinary action and develop learners' ability to practise self-discipline (Department of Education 2000:12). Soneson (2005:28) also indicates that giving praise when children obey or when they do things well encourages them to model their behaviour on positive reinforcement, and it encourages them to learn self-discipline. Self-discipline is certainly the end product of positive and constructive discipline, and Mokhele (2006: 150) suggests that positive, constructive discipline should promote the development of self-discipline.

2.3.4 Ensuring safety and support

The aim of school discipline is to create a safe and happy learning environment within the school. Discipline at school has two very important goals, namely to create an environment conducive to learning and teaching; and to ensure the safety of staff and learners (Joubert, De Waal & Rossouw 2005:208). The management of discipline consequently calls on educators to make learners feel emotionally comfortable and physically safe (Mokhele 2006:151). Managing discipline in schools provides learners with safety assurance. Olley, Cohn and Cowan (2010:8) agree that learners are better able to learn when they feel safe and supported. Mtsweni (2008:28) also maintains that learners learn best in an orderly and safe environment.

According to Le Mottee (2005:5), discipline has nothing to do with controlling disruptive or other unacceptable behaviour, but with ensuring a "safe and valuing environment so that the rights and needs of people are respected, vindicated and safeguarded". Ndamani (2008:196) concludes that if both parents and the school

are supportive of each other over the learner discipline matters, most of the discipline issues at the school can be easily and quickly resolved.

2.3.5 Encouraging compliance and co-operation

One of the aims of discipline is to allow learners to freely comply with set rules and regulations and to work collaboratively with other learners and educators. So, Koenig (2008:5) maintains that the goals of discipline are to motivate a learner to:

- stop disruptive behaviours;
- adopt productive behaviours; and
- have a desire to cooperate.

This implies that effective discipline will inspire learners to be co-operative and conform to policies.

2.4 THE LEGISLATIVE FRAMEWORK

2.4.1 National legislation

South Africa has passed several laws that pronounce corporal punishment's illegality. This means that South Africa has passed legislation which prohibits administration of corporal punishment. South African law has therefore created a new legal context and it is important for principals and educators to know the law relating to school discipline and punishment, and to be familiar with legal concepts, principles and procedures so that they can continue building and maintaining effective schools (Joubert, De Waal & Rossouw 2005:210).

2.4.1.1 The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa

The Constitution of South Africa is the supreme law of the Republic; any law or conduct inconsistent with it is invalid, and the obligations imposed by it must be fulfilled (The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa 1996: section (s) 2). This means that all policies should not be in contrast to the constitution. This constitution was adopted as the supreme law of the Republic so as to:

- Heal the divisions of the past and establish a society based on democratic values, social justice and fundamental human rights;
- Lay the foundations for a democratic and open society in which government is based on the will of the people and every citizen is equally protected by law;
- Improve the quality of life of all citizens and free the potential of each person; and
- Build a united and democratic South Africa able to take its rightful place as a sovereign state in the family of nations.

The South African Constitution (1996: s.12) states that: “everyone has the right to freedom and security of the person which includes the right not to be treated or punished in a cruel, inhuman or degrading way”. Based on the extract, positive discipline which is constructive and rights-based should be emphasised. The constitution (1996: s.10) also states that: “everyone has inherent dignity and the right to have their dignity respected and protected”. By applying corporal punishment educators violate learners’ rights. It is therefore crucial that every child be protected from maltreatment, neglect, abuse or degradation (1996: s 28).

2.4.1.2 The South African Schools Act

The South African Schools Act (SASA) (84 of 1996: s.10) states that: (1) “no person may administer corporal punishment at a school to a learner; (2) any person who contravenes subsection 1 is guilty of an offence and liable on conviction to a sentence which could be imposed for assault”. This leaves schools with the responsibility of identifying and implementing alternative disciplinary practices and procedures (Department of Education 2000:1). This means educators should refrain from discipline which is punitive and punishment-oriented. The management of discipline therefore calls on educators to make children feel emotionally comfortable and physically safe so that they (learners) can develop self-discipline (intrinsic discipline) and accountability in their actions (Mokhele 2006:151).

2.4.1.3 The National Education Policy Act

The National Education Policy Act (27 of 1996:3) also stipulates that: “no person shall administer corporal punishment or subject a learner to psychological or physical abuse at any educational institution.”

2.4.2 International legislation

There are also international laws that support the abolition of corporal punishment. These are briefly discussed below.

2.4.2.1 Convention on the Rights of the Child

The Department of Education (2000:5) highlights that South Africa is a signatory to the Convention on the Rights of the Child, which compels it to pass laws and take social educational and administrative measures to protect the child from all physical and mental violence, injury or abuse, neglect or negligent treatment, maltreatment or exploitation, including sexual abuse. The Convention on the Rights of the Child (1990: Article 19) thus maintains that: “States Parties shall take all appropriate legislative, administrative, social and educational measures to protect the child from all forms of physical or mental violence, injury or abuse, neglect or negligent treatment, maltreatment or exploitation, including sexual abuse, while in the care of parent(s), legal guardian(s) or any other person who has the care of the child”.

2.4.2.2 The African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child

The African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child (1999: Article 16) postulates that: “States Parties to the present Charter shall take specific legislative, administrative, social and educational measures to protect the child from all forms of torture, inhuman or degrading treatment and especially physical or mental injury or abuse, neglect or maltreatment including sexual abuse, while in the care of the child”. The Charter (1999: Article 11, s.5) also adds that its member countries must take steps to ensure that a child who is subjected to school or parental discipline shall be treated with humanity and respect for the inherent dignity of the child.

2.5 THE ALTERNATIVES TO CORPORAL PUNISHMENT

The manual, “*The alternatives to corporal punishment*” was introduced by the Department of Education in 2000. The manual intends to assist educators to find more constructive ways of managing discipline in schools. It outlines the legislation that bans corporal punishment. It also provides guidelines on alternatives to corporal punishment; and disciplinary measures and procedures. According to the manual, educators are expected to identify and implement alternative disciplinary practices and procedures.

The Department of Education (2000:12) encourages educators to implement a proactive approach to put things in place which will safeguard the culture of learning and teaching in their classrooms. The manual suggests the following strategies which will set the stage for a positive learning environment and that can significantly reduce problems with discipline in the classroom:

- preparing for lessons;
- exercising self- discipline;
- having extension work available;
- ensuring that teaching and learning happen consistently;
- ensuring that learners are stimulated;
- establishing class rules with the learners;
- making a space for time out or a conflict resolution corner;
- affirming learners; and
- building positive relationships with learners.

Soneson (2005:28) also provides general hints and suggestions on alternatives to corporal punishment and other forms of humiliating and degrading punishment:

- Give praise when children obey or when they do things well. This encourages children to model their behaviour on positive reinforcement, and it encourages them to learn self-discipline. Praise costs nothing, and even rewards need not cost vast amounts of money.
- Practise what you preach. If your child is not allowed to use dirty language or to swear, neither should you.
- Be realistic in what you expect from children at different ages.
- Encourage children to solve their own problems, as they can often provide answers that will result in an acceptable compromise. For instance, a useful technique with older children is to use 'restorative justice' practises, which are well-known in African culture. 'Restorative justice' aims to involve both 'victim' and 'offender' in meeting together to devise a plan on how to repair harm caused or hurt relationships. At the same time, plans to prevent future misbehaviour can also be developed by all concerned parties. These techniques have been successfully used by school governing bodies seeking alternative punishments in the school system in South Africa.
- Do not use threats or shout at children. It is better if children do as you ask because they understand the reasons why, rather than because they are frightened or bullied.
- Try and use 'good' words about your child. Naming, bad-mouthing and humiliation have been shown to lead to a lower self-esteem, and can become self-fulfilling prophecies (i.e. you are just lazy/stupid/fat/bad).

- Negotiate a compromise, even if you have to reconsider your own views. Think: how important is this? Does it affect the child's safety? Will anyone be hurt if I compromise? Is this important enough to matter in ten years' time?
- Use guidance and counselling methods, especially with older children. If needed, call on a relative with whom the child has a special relationship, or an older person in the family or community whom the child respects. Ask this person to discuss the negative effects of the child's behaviour with him or her, and to give guidance on what the child's expectations are.
- Children learn by doing, therefore give the child a non-abusive task to perform, preferably one that is related to what the child has done wrong. A child who has to fix, clean or tidy something that he or she has broken or dirtied will be less likely to repeat that behaviour in future.

2.6 THE IMPACT OF THE ABOLITION OF CORPORAL PUNISHMENT ON SCHOOL DISCIPLINE

After the banning of corporal punishment in schools under the South African Schools Act (84 of 1996) lack of discipline and safety in schools became one of the major challenges in South Africa. It has become increasingly difficult for educators to ensure discipline in schools as a result of the banning of corporal punishment (Maphosa & Shumba 2010:397).

Educators who previously relied on corporal punishment now have to develop alternative methods of coping with discipline problems (Naong 2007: 289). Educators feel disempowered by the outlawing of corporal punishment. According to Ndamani (2008:196), lack of discipline or challenging behaviour in secondary schools and classrooms is one of the serious problems experienced by

educators. This challenging behaviour results in educators feeling helpless and disempowered, and this may lead to unsuccessful teaching and learning. It is also perceived that from the time learners became aware that corporal punishment had been abolished, their misbehaviour escalated to the extent that currently a state of unruliness prevails (Masitsa 2008:237). Maphosa and Shumba (2010:397) also state that the thrust on children's rights and subsequent banning of corporal punishment has ushered in an era of licentiousness in learners as they no longer have respect for their educators.

Abolition of corporal punishment has a negative impact on school discipline. Matoti (2010:577) confirms that learners do not respect educators and they bring dangerous weapons to school, endangering everybody's lives. Moreover, educators in South Africa are generally unhappy, demoralised and exhausted (Naong 2007:291).

Due to lack of discipline, equivocal policies, and licentiousness displayed by learners, the schools also experience the following challenges:

- Gangsterism;
- Teenage pregnancies;
- Vandalistic behaviour and abhorrent graffiti;
- Lack of commitment on their (learners) work leading to dysfunctionality of many rural secondary schools;
- Dismissal of educators; and
- High learner drop-out rate.

2.7 FACTORS CONTRIBUTING TOWARDS DISCIPLINARY PROBLEMS IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS

There are many causes of lack of discipline in schools (Ndamani 2008:177). Some of these causes of disciplinary problems at schools are discussed below.

2.7.1 Insufficient training on alternative methods of discipline

In 1996 South Africa passed legislation that outlawed corporal punishment in South African schools (Department of Education 2000:5). Therefore educators were expected to find alternative methods to manage and maintain discipline in schools. This led to an introduction of the manual "*Alternatives to Corporal Punishment*" in 2000. The manual was intended to serve as a guideline for educators on alternative methods of discipline. The Department of Education had to ensure that training was executed on alternatives to corporal punishment. According to Le Roux (2005:7), the government should play a more proactive role in organising information sessions with educators and principals on alternative forms of discipline.

The research has indicated that there was minimal training on this issue. This suggests that educators were not equipped with alternative methods to corporal punishment after its abolition. According to Le Roux (2005:7) one of the main contributing factors towards disciplinary problems in schools is that educators were not equipped with alternative methods to corporal punishment even after 1996 when corporal punishment in schools was abolished. Star (2006:1) also maintains that not enough has been done to train educators in the alternative methods of discipline introduced by the Department Of Education. Soneson (2005:19) also affirms that a large number of educators have not been reached by the training on alternatives to corporal

punishment and they are not equipped with skills to manage discipline in the classroom through non-violent means.

Consequently schools are also experiencing increasing incidents of ill-discipline and uncertainty about which disciplinary measures to use to maintain discipline (Masitsa 2008:236) due to minimal and sporadic training on alternatives to corporal punishment (Le Roux 2005:7). Nevertheless, discipline is the practice of care and respect for others and self. Therefore in managing discipline in the classroom educators have to remove other forms of punishment harmful to learners' self esteem. This implies that physical punishment as well as emotional castigation has no place in the classroom (Mokhele 2006:150).

2.7.2 Poor educator – learner relationships

Educator – learner relationships appear to be an integral feature in the management of discipline in public high schools (Mokhele 2006:148). Positive educator – learner relationships have the potential of creating conducive learning environment in the classroom and will determine whether or not a learner benefits from the teaching-learning situation (Mokhele 2006:149). A positive relationship between educators and learners is imperative for effective teaching and learning. Poor relationships between educators and learners will lead to an escalation of disciplinary problems which, in turn, will impact negatively on learner performance. Educators should first understand that learners are unique beings; with various capabilities, skills, behavioural problems and backgrounds. Therefore educators should treat them as such to create mutual relationships built on mutual trust.

In the classroom situation there must be a positive rapport between educators and learners so that effective teaching and learning can take place (Mtsweni 2008:35). The researcher further indicates that educator-learner relationship should be

characterized by caring; and a positive school climate should manifest listening, critical questioning, openness and a feeling of being cared for. This will result in improved behaviour, self confidence, reduction of absenteeism, reduced dropout rates and good performance.

2.7.3 Lack of parental involvement

Koenig (2008:2) indicates that lack of parental involvement and support in and for the schools are the main causes of misbehaviours in schools. Parents become reluctant to participate in the education of their children. The parents have a tendency of shifting their role of instilling good morals in their children to the educators and this causes problems for the educators as they need parental support in dealing with disciplinary problems (Ndamani 2008:177). It is evident that parents who play little or no role in their children's homework and study programme contribute to the poor performance of their children in the classroom (Singh, Mbokodi and Msila 2004:301). If schools truly want parents to be partners in education, they must allow parents the ample opportunity to voice their opinions, concerns and views in a co-equal relationship with educators (Lemmer and van Wyk 2004:184).

2.7.4 Poor communication between the school and home

Schools are compelled to communicate regularly with parents about the school programme, developments, curriculum, as well as learners' progress and development. Schools use various methods to communicate with parents, for example through media such as letters, phone calls, e-mails, messages via cell-phones and meetings. Sometimes, some of these methods appear to be ineffective, depending on the type of that particular community. There are many occasions when schools can exchange information with parents. These include day-to-day formal contacts; brochures

about the school's policies and procedures; formal meetings aimed at solving problems or routinely reviewing learners' progress; newsletters and bulletin boards (Porter 2004:288). According to Lemmer and van Wyk (2004:183) home-school communication is one of the most traditional and vital form of parent involvement, but it is often poorly implemented. For instance, in a situation where a learner has committed misconduct the school might resort to using a letter as a source of communication. Therefore, a learner who has committed misconduct is used to deliver the letter to his/her parents. So, 50% of the letters don't reach their destinations. Then, communication breakdown begins. Ndamani (2008: 188) indicates that communication breakdown between the school and the home is one of the factors which contribute to a lack of discipline in secondary schools.

Lemmer and van Wyk (2004:183) further indicate that according to Epstein's model of parent involvement; home-school communication should be a two-way communication and reflect a co-equal partnership between families and schools. To promote effective communication with families, schools should design a variety of school-to-home as well as home-to-school communication strategies with all families, each year, about school programmes and about the learners' progress (Hanhan 1998:107 as cited in Lemmer & van Wyk 2004:183). Educators and parents can help the child by their cooperation and mutual understanding (Dreikurs, Cassel, & Ferguson: 2004:57).

2.7.5 Poor parent – child relationships

Ndamani (2008: 188) indicates that the majority of respondents do agree that poor relationships between the parents and their children contribute to lack of discipline in secondary schools, for example:

- Rejection of children by their parents can lead to a lack of discipline in secondary schools (Ndamani 2008:186).
- Parents also fail to exercise control over their children (Ndamani 2008:187).
- Lack of moral training and poor modelling are some of the factors that contribute to lack of discipline in schools (Rosen 2005:24).
- Domestic violence affects the children emotionally, socially, physically and behaviourally (Szyndrowski 2005:10 as cited in Mabitla 2006:18). According to Mabitla (2006:18), parent behaviour may teach children some values, morals, problem-solving techniques and pro-social behaviour. So, if parents intervene ineffectively in the lives of their children they may inspire them negatively as children model what they observe daily.

2.8 MANAGING DISCIPLINE IN SCHOOLS

Discipline and management are central to effective schools. So, all educators are responsible, as professionals, for managing discipline in schools, as stated in Blandford (1998:1). Schools need organisational structures, rules and aims if they are to be effective. According to Blandford (1998: 37), effective management of discipline does not just happen; it requires consultation, planning, commitment, and constant review and evaluation. The author also maintains that a shared understanding of education management will enable schools to design, implement and review a discipline policy that works within the school and reflects the needs of learners, educators, support agencies and the community.

An educator's inability to control a learner or class prevents the process of education and learning from happening. Blandford

(1998:61) further states that the ability to maintain an orderly, disciplined classroom environment is essential if teaching and learning are to occur.

2.8.1 Promoting positive behaviour in schools

Harper, Horno, Landsdown, Martin, Newell and Nilsson (2005:3) highlight key issues in promoting positive discipline in schools:

- **Children's motivation:** The overwhelming majority of children want to learn and are capable of good behaviour. Educators can work effectively with learners if they adopt a positive approach, avoiding anger on the one hand and ineffective pleading on the other. Porter (2004:217) identifies two tasks of motivating learners: first, to make them more willing to put effort to learn; and second, to structure your teaching so that it is easier for them to learn. Le Roux (2005:7) also maintains that educators should praise children for work done well or reward them for outstanding academic and sporting achievements, which is a way to motivate children and encourage them.

- **Rewards, not punishments:** Good behaviour depends on establishing a clear framework of rules, boundaries, routines, rewards for good behaviour and corrective sanctions. Young people are more likely to behave in an orderly fashion if the expectations concerning their behaviour are made clear. Cregor (2008:32) confirms that some schools offer a variety of rewards for positive behaviour, including lunch with a friend, homework passes, free time in the gym, or a chance to read outside. Leaman (2005:38) further indicates that learners who have made an effort to contain their own behaviour should be praised and even included in class awards or certificates. Positive public relations could be created by sharing some positives with the child's parents (Young 2008:100). This researcher believes that the

educator's comments will go far toward establishing meaningful, positive home-school relations.

- **Shared rule-making:** Involving children in making the school rules is shown to significantly reduce disciplinary problems. Rules are far more effective if educators and learners work together to agree on them. Kupchik (2010:195) confirms that learners are a great resource for identifying the school's biggest behaviour problems, and they might also be able to distinguish between concerns over actual problems the school faces as opposed to unrealistic fears. Another important reason for requesting learner input is that it would be a big step toward creating a democratic and inclusive school climate, one of the most important factors associated with safe schools. Allowing learners a voice in how they are treated would empower them, make them feel part of the school community, and increase their bonds with the school. The researcher further indicates that it would also make them more likely to view the school's rules as fair and legitimate, which is another crucial factor in preventing misbehaviour.

- **Respecting rights as a reciprocal process:** If children feel that their rights are respected, it is easier for them to understand the importance of respecting other people's rights.

- **Adult behaviour:** The behaviour of an educator is the most important determining factor in learner behaviour. If educators act aggressively or ineffectually, learners will not respond in a constructive way. Soneson (2005: 26) maintains that 'Good' discipline – which must ultimately be self-discipline – depends on adults modelling and explaining positive behaviour.

- **Winning co-operation and reducing educator stress:** Instead of going straight for a punishment, educators should explain the rule, urge compliance, and remind the learner of their choice in

the matter. To minimise educator stress and avoid a continuing battle with the learner, it is important to blame the behaviour rather than the child, keep any anger brief, perhaps get away from the learner for a while, and rebuild the relationship as soon as possible.

- **A planned, whole-school approach:** All of the above is much easier if everyone concerned with the good running of a school works together. Educators will have a more consistent approach if there is collective agreement on how to teach and manage behaviour.

- **Curriculum matters:** A curriculum that is stimulating, challenging and involves learners will encourage them to behave well and learn more effectively. A good curriculum is necessary for maintaining order (Porter 2007:35).

- **Promoting equity and respect:** Where differences between different groups are acknowledged and valued, and the damaging impact of discrimination and prejudice is realised, there is less likely to be violence and bullying either by educators or learners towards each other. Rogers (2002:41) also maintains that educators should show respect for their learners, by treating them in a polite and courteous manner, and not resorting to making unfair and hurtful comments based on sarcasm or belittling the learner.

- **Children as a resource:** Children can play a valuable role as mediators, peer counsellors and peer educators to address conflict between children in the school. In this way, they contribute their skills toward the creation of a violence-free environment, and relieve pressure on educators. Learners should also not simply be regarded as receivers of information; their potential to make diverse contributions to reach shared aims must

be recognised. Wagner (1992: 56) states some of many contributions that can be made by learners, for instance support for school policies.

2.8.2 Reducing disciplinary problems in schools

The factors discussed below are appropriate for reducing disciplinary problems in schools:

2.8.2.1 Code of conduct for learners

According to section 8 of the South African Schools Act (84 of 1996), a governing body of a public school must adopt a Code of Conduct. Roos (2003:510) maintains that it is the duty of each governing body to adopt a code of conduct that will be the legal instrument regulating the maintenance of discipline in the school. Whenever the code of conduct is adopted and implemented, the governing body is empowered by the South African Schools Act (1996:s.8, ss.1). The Government Gazette (no.18900 of 15 May 1998) sets out guidelines for the consideration of governing bodies in adopting a code of conduct for learners:

- Section 8 of the South African Schools Act provides that a governing body of a public school must adopt a Code of Conduct. The Code of Conduct must aim at establishing a disciplined and purposeful environment to facilitate effective education and learning in schools.
- This document sets out guidelines for consideration by governing bodies of public schools in adopting a Code of Conduct for learners to ensure that there is order and discipline in schools.
- The Code of Conduct must be subject to the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996, the South African Schools Act, 1996, and provincial legislation. It must reflect the

constitutional democracy, human rights and transparent communication which underpin South African society.

- The Code of Conduct must inform the learners of the way in which they should conduct themselves at school in preparation for their conduct and safety in civil society. It must set a standard of moral behaviour for learners and equip them with the expertise, knowledge and skills they would be expected to evince as worthy and responsible citizens. It must promote the civic responsibilities of the school and it must develop leadership. The main focus of the Code of Conduct must be positive discipline; it must not be punitive and punishment-oriented but facilitate constructive learning.
- Each school must develop its own Code of Conduct. In formulating a Code of Conduct as a consensus document and before adopting it, the governing body must involve the parents, learners, educators, and non-educators at that school. After the adoption of the Code of Conduct, each stakeholder must receive a copy thereof. The above stakeholders must also be consulted when the Code of Conduct is reviewed annually or when any amendments are made.
- The purpose of a code of conduct is to promote positive discipline, self-discipline and exemplary conduct, as learners learn by observation and experience.
- All key stakeholders should be committed to the Code of Conduct despite its being directed specifically at learners.
- The Code of Conduct must suit the development of the learners and be appropriate to the different school levels. The language used must be easily understandable to make the content accessible. The format should be user-friendly.
- The Code of Conduct must contain a set of moral values, norms and principles which the school community should uphold. However, the Code of Conduct is only enforceable against learners - no other person.

- The Code of Conduct should clarify and promote the roles and responsibilities of various stakeholders in the creation of a proper learning environment in schools.

It is important for schools to have rules to regulate the behaviour of the learners (Ndamani 2008:183). The author further indicates that having set rules in schools is one way of solving the discipline problems that are experienced. Appropriate boundaries can be set for the behaviour of the learners by using school rules. Learners feel secure and in control when clear boundaries show them what they should and should not do.

2.8.2.2 Creating a safe environment

Creating and maintaining a safe, disciplined school environment is one of the important challenges facing principals, educators and parents in schools (Squelch 2000:i). Creating a safe environment in schools has become one of the priorities in the department of Education. The aim of school discipline is to create a safe and happy learning environment within the school. This means that an environment which is violence-free should be created to allow creative teaching and learning. Discipline at school has two very important goals, namely to create an environment conducive to learning and teaching; and to ensure the safety of staff and learners (Joubert, De Waal & Rossouw 2005:208). Gaustad (1991:17) also confirms that the safety of learners and staff must come first. In a classroom where an educator is unable to maintain order and discipline, learners may become unmotivated and distressed, and the climate for learning is diminished, leading to underachievement (Hill & Hill 1994: 16). They further indicate that learners learn to the best of their abilities in an orderly and safe environment. This implies that learners should feel free and secure in school premises.

According to Naong (2008:288) educators are expected not only to accept the challenge of maintaining discipline in their classrooms, but also to use humane methods and act within the law, which demands a complete paradigm shift from educators in South Africa. According to Mokhele (2006:150), discipline is the practice of care and respect for others and self, therefore in managing discipline in the classroom educators have to remove those forms of punishment harmful to learners' self esteem. This implies that physical punishment as well as emotional castigation has no place in the classroom. The management of discipline therefore calls on educators to make children feel emotionally comfortable and physically safe so that they (learners) can develop self-discipline (intrinsic discipline) and accountability in their actions (Mokhele 2006:151).

2.8.2.3 Classroom management

Educators should be proactive; they should not wait for challenging behaviour to happen before they contemplate dealing with it (Leaman 2005:23). It is imperative that every school develop its classroom discipline plan to avoid hasty, timid or hostile responses to learner behaviour (Porter 2004:25). Thus effective education and management are not things that happen by chance – they have to be planned (Oosthuizen 2010:4). The plan should consist of rules, positive recognition and consequences that result when learners do not follow the rules.

Kupchik (2010:203) maintains that one of the most efficient and effective steps a school could take to reduce learner misbehaviour would be to help educators improve their classroom management skills. The researcher further states that better classroom management would mean that many cases of misbehaviour could be stopped or prevented before they escalate to where an educator writes a referral; in turn, fewer referrals would mean that the school disciplinarians (deans, interventionists, assistant

principals) would feel less overwhelmed and have more time to help learners.

Olley, Cohn and Cowan (2010:7) highlight some of the most important factors that contribute to positive classroom behaviour:

Be prepared instructionally

- Spend time before the school year begins arranging the physical space of the classroom to best use that space.
- Clearly establish what is expected of learners, including that they are expected to follow directions and meet expectations.
- Organize learners' time.
- Make sure materials are ready.
- Design activities that are relevant and involve the learner in learning.
- Give many opportunities for cooperative group learning.

Establish behavioural expectations

- Establish rules and procedures and teach, clarify, and enforce them consistently and systematically.
- Align consequences with the classroom expectations.
- Teach replacement behaviours (desired behaviours.)
- Give immediate feedback regarding the meeting of expectations.

Monitor learner work regularly

- Give positive feedback regularly for academic performance and for behavioural compliance by celebrating success and accomplishments.

- Handle disruptions quickly when they occur while continuing to manage the rest of the classroom and the lesson.
- Respond to misbehaviour promptly but not punitively.
- Minimize wasted time, confusion, or disruption.
- Spend at least 70% of class time on academic engagement whether educator directed, independent work, or in small. Groups.

2.8.2.4 Educator – learner relationship

The educator-learner relationship refers to the communication and understanding that exist between the educator and the learner (Mokhele 2006:151). Rogers (2002:41) maintains that educators should show respect for their learners, by treating them in a polite and courteous manner, and not resorting to making unfair and hurtful comments based on sarcasm or belittling the learner. In that way learners will be encouraged to be self-disciplined and that will reduce learner misconduct. A positive educator-child relationship would consist of ingredients such as: mutual trust, a sense of loyalty, a sense of caring and interest; mutual respect and respect for the rights of the other; and valuing the person as a person independent of what he or she does for you (Jackson 1991:29).

The key to maintaining good discipline is to establish a good relationship with learners based on mutual respect and rapport (Rogers 2002:41). So, it is evident that educators who are successful in managing misbehaviour in the classroom maintain good relations with the learners (Mokhele 2006:148). Porter (2004:25) also confirms that when you respect learners, they will respect your values, rules and opinions.

Schools should emphasise positive discipline that is not punitive and punishment oriented. They should also create an environment which encourages positive discipline for effective teaching and

learning to prevail. Discipline and effective teaching are essential to order in classroom life and learning (Rogers 2002:40). Positive discipline will encourage good educator-learner relationship. Westwood (1995:5) stipulates that the most fundamental partnership of all, as far as positive learning outcomes goes, is that between learner and educator. Positive educator-learner relationships have the potential of creating conducive learning environment in the classroom and will determine whether or not a learner can benefit from the teaching-learning situation (Mokhele 2006:149).

2.8.2.5 Good curriculum

According to Rogers (2002:40), the golden rule of maintaining discipline is to realise that good discipline is a natural consequence of good teaching. If educators teach effectively by making the work clear and interesting and helping learners to stay 'on task' by keeping them involved in the lesson and helping them when they have problems with the work, we will find that discipline will follow.

Great lessons begin by understanding outcomes (Mendler, Curvin & Mendler 2008:69). According to these researchers, educators should know exactly what they are intending to teach and what they need to achieve through particular lessons. Therefore it is imperative for an educator to have a reason and a purpose for everything done in the classroom.

Oosthuizen (2010:5) further stipulates that in order to be an effective educator who succeeds in inculcating good discipline in their learners, educators have to possess three sets of skills:

- Knowledge of their subject – they must be masters of their subject.

- They have to know how to present their subject in such a way that lessons will progress smoothly and the learners' attention retained.
- They should have group management skills.

Maintaining discipline is, in a large measure, a by-product of good teaching. A good curriculum is necessary for maintaining order (Porter 2007:35). Schools should therefore ensure that good curriculum is offered to arouse learners' interest. It should be the duty of each educator that the lessons are prepared in an interesting way. Various methods of teaching should be employed to make teaching and learning more interesting. Consequently learners would find reason for being cooperative and well-disciplined.

2.8.2.6 Parental involvement

Ndamani (2008:182) postulates that discipline in schools is the responsibility of everyone and not only of the educators. So, it should be a priority for schools to involve parents as much as possible in the education of their children. The researcher further stipulates that when the parents and educators work together, they can produce more effective changes in the learners' behaviour than when either party is grappling with the problem alone.

Joubert, De Waal & Rossouw (2004:85) further indicate that it becomes clear that parents to a great extent hold the key to the establishment and upholding of school discipline. Therefore, as a crucially important partner of the educator, the parent should set the basic principles of discipline in the upbringing of the child. The research also shows that learners who come from ill-disciplined families cause the most problems at school. So, parents need to take responsibility for their children's conduct, as

parenting is not the primary purpose of educators (Le Roux 2005:7).

The South African Schools Act of 1996 (SASA) provides formal power in education to parents as well as communities. SASA creates the expectation for parents to be meaningful partners in school governance (Singh, Mbokodi & Matsila 2004:301). So, parents need to be empowered to be fully and actively involved in the education of their children. Singh, Mbokodi and Matsila (2004:306) outline the framework which could be used in schools to enhance black parental participation in education. The framework is divided into five stages and these stages are essential in the empowerment of parents, namely:

- Stage 1: convening level
- Stage 2: clarification level
- Stage 3: commitment level
- Stage 4: attainment level
- Stage 5: evaluation level

Stage 1: Convening level

- Demystify leadership for external stakeholders and partners in education;
- explain the importance of parental/community involvement in education;
- make parents aware that they can enhance quality in schools;
- discuss transformation in education with them;
- create opportunities for parents to become partners in education; and
- allow them to voice out what they want education to embrace.

Stage 2: Clarification level

- Clarify the role of parents in education;
- make educators aware of the positive potential of their (parents) role;
- make parents aware of their role in contributing towards change in education;
- jointly draw up the vision and mission of the school;
- agree on aims and objectives;
- agree on strategic plans to attain aims and objectives;
- inform parents of curriculum matters and develop their knowledge accordingly; and
- clarify differential roles for parents with varying educational backgrounds (e.g. parents with a low literacy level can contribute meaningfully towards the upkeep of the school grounds).

Stage 3: Commitment level

- Educators and parents must have the will to work together;
- plan jointly;
- improve relationships;
- reduce stress and anxiety;
- create a conducive climate for consensual decision making; and
- apply a collegial approach on policy issues.

Stage 4: Attainment level

- Co-ordinate and control activities;
- jointly deliberate on educational issues;
- assume joint responsibility for resource utilisation;
- adopt a transparent approach in policy implementation; and

- contribute jointly towards the attainment of the vision and mission of the institution.

Stage 5: Evaluation level

- Jointly evaluate educational outcomes;
- provide feedback on cost-effectiveness;
- correct faulty communication channels; and
- modify current plans and consider alternative goals, if necessary.

2.8.3 Alternative methods to corporal punishment

In order to assist educators in establishing alternatives to corporal punishment, Professor Kader Asmal, the then Minister of Education, designed a comprehensive document entitled '*Alternatives to Corporal Punishment*' (Department of Education 2000). Disciplinary measures to be taken in South African schools are clearly documented in different levels (Maphosa and Shumba 2010:390). As Maphosa and Shumba have indicated, the Department of Education (2000:25) clearly outlines disciplinary measures to be employed when dealing with misconduct at different levels:

Level 1 - misconduct inside the classroom

Failing to be in class on time, bunking classes, failing to finish homework, failing to respond to reasonable instructions, being dishonest with minor consequences.

Examples of disciplinary actions for misconduct inside the classroom - Carried out by class educator

- Verbal warnings;
- Community service;

- Demerits - losing credits which have already been gained;
- Additional work which is constructive and which possibly relates to the misconduct;
- Small menial tasks like tidying up the classroom;
- Detention in which learners use their time constructively, but within the confines of the classroom i.e. they cannot participate in extra-mural activities or go home.

Level 2 - misconduct by breaking school rules

Frequently repeating Level 1 misconduct and not responding to disciplinary measures taken by the educator, smoking or carrying tobacco, leaving school without permission, using abusive language, interrupting education in the classroom, showing disrespect for another person, engaging in minor vandalism like graffiti, being dishonest with more serious consequences.

Examples of disciplinary action for misconduct which breaks school rules - Carried out by a higher authority such as the head of department:

- Any of the disciplinary actions listed above;
- Disciplinary talk with the learner;
- Talks with learner's parents or guardians;
- Written warnings;
- Signing contract with the learner who agrees to improve;
- Daily report taken by the learner and signed by all educators;
- Performing duties that improve the school environment such as cleaning, gardening or administrative tasks.

Level 3 - serious misconduct or serious violation of school codes

Frequently repeating Level 2 misconduct, where action taken by school authorities is considered ineffective, inflicting minor injury on another person, gambling, being severely disruptive of classes, forging documents or signatures with minor consequences, using racist, sexist or other discriminatory behaviour, possessing or distributing pornographic, racist or sexist materials, possessing dangerous weapons, theft, vandalism, cheating during exams.

If the principal has good reason to suspect a learner of carrying drugs, stolen property, weapons or pornographic material onto the school property, the principal or an educator may search him/her. A person of the same sex must conduct the search in private and the dignity of the learner must be respected.

Examples of disciplinary actions for serious misconduct - carried out by the principal or referred to an outside agency for counselling:

- Any of the disciplinary actions listed above;
- Written warning of the possibility of suspension from the school;
- Referral to a counsellor or social worker;
- Community service, once permission is granted by the provincial education department.

Level 4 - very serious misconduct or very serious violations of school codes

Repetition of Level 3 misconduct where disciplinary action has been ineffective, threatening another person with a dangerous weapon, causing intentional limited injury to another person,

verbally threatening the safety of another person, engaging in sexual abuse such as grabbing, engaging in sexual activity, selling drugs, possessing or using alcohol or drugs or being drunk or under the influence of narcotics, disrupting the entire school: for example, boycotting or staging a picket without consent, forging documents or signatures with serious consequences.

Examples of punishments for very serious misconduct –

Carried out by the principal or the school governing body together with the provincial education department:

- Any of the disciplinary actions listed above;
- Referral of learner to an outside agency for counselling;
- Application to the provincial education department for limited suspension from all school activities.

Level 5 - criminal acts which not only violate school codes but which breach the law

Repetition of Level 4 acts, intending to inflict major physical injury on another person (assault), intentionally using a dangerous weapon, sexual harassment, sexual abuse and rape, robbery, major theft, breaking and entering locked premises, murder.

Examples of disciplinary actions for criminal misconduct -

Carried out by the principal and the school governing body together with the provincial education department:

- Application to the provincial education department for expulsion or transfer of the learner from the school;
- Allow for criminal or civil prosecutions which may follow, given that the misconduct is of a criminal nature.

Suspension and expulsion

After a fair disciplinary hearing (see below) the school governing body may suspend a learner from attending school either as a punishment for no longer than one week or pending a decision made by the head of department as to whether the learner should be expelled from school or not. The learner may be expelled from a public school only by the Head of Department (HoD) and only if found guilty of serious misconduct after a fair hearing. The learner at a public school or his/her parent may appeal against expulsion to the provincial MEC for education. If the learner is expelled, the HoD must find an alternative school for him/her.

Disciplinary hearing or tribunal

This is similar to a court case held at a school, but it is not a court of law. A hearing takes place when very serious misconduct occurs. The principal must refer the problem to the school governing body, without at this stage mentioning the name of the learner. The school governing body must make arrangements for a disciplinary hearing. It has to guarantee the learner a fair hearing; otherwise its decisions may be challenged. It may not contravene the Bill of Rights, the Constitution and the provincial education department's regulations. Before the hearing, the School Governing Body (SGB) must appoint one or two people to check whether the case is serious enough to warrant the hearing. If the SGB decides to go ahead, it must appoint in writing a tribunal of three people to the hearing. These three people do not have to be members of the SGB. They may be outsiders, such as a retired school principal, a church minister or a magistrate, but they must be neutral and in no way involved with the problem. The tribunal or disciplinary committee must follow due process in conducting the hearing.

Due process for the hearing

- The members of the tribunal must not know beforehand about the details of the problem and must draw their conclusions on the basis of the evidence put before them during their own investigation of the learner's misconduct. The recommendations they make to the SGB must include disciplinary or corrective steps to help the learner stop his/her unacceptable behaviour.
- The principal must communicate the charges brought against the learner in writing and must inform the learner and his/her parents at least five days before the hearing of the date, time and venue for the hearing. The principal must also warn the learner and his/her parents that the hearing could result in the learner's expulsion or suspension from the school.
- The learner and his/her parents must be told that they have the right to bring evidence to the tribunal and that the learner or his/her representative has the right to tell his/her side of the story. The tribunal does not have the right to exclude lawyers from the hearing.
- The learner charged with misconduct and his/her parents may attend the hearing, but cannot be forced to give evidence.
- Witnesses may be called and anyone at the hearing, including the learner and/or the parents, may question such witnesses. However, this must be done in a fair way and the learner who stands accused always has the right to reply.

- All participants at the hearing must have access to all documents presented. These can include written statements, school records, character references, etc.
- Everything said at the hearing must be recorded word for word. Tape or video recordings may be made.
- The accused learner and his/her parents have the right to make statements in mitigation, in other words, to give explanations for what has occurred and to ask the tribunal members to be lenient in their decision.
- After the hearing, the tribunal or hearing committee must make its recommendations to the SGB. The SGB does not have to accept these recommendations and it may refer some matters back to the tribunal.

Rosen (2005:25) also indicates some of the consequences which learners may face if they fail to abide by the school rules: verbal reprimand, changing a learner's seat assignment, extra assignment to be done at home, afterschool detention, a call to a parent or a parent conference and notation on the grade card. These consequences will assist to minimise misbehaviour by learners.

Although various alternative disciplinary measures to corporal punishment were introduced, some educators feel that they are not effective (Maphosa and Shumba 2010:397). This is supported by Olley, Cohn and Cowan (2010:7) as they argue that extensive use of suspension and expulsion does not correct misbehaviour over time and actually contributes to increased misbehaviour, lack of academic achievement, poorer school climate, an elevated dropout rate, and increased juvenile delinquency and incarceration. Le Roux (2005:7) also concurs that methods such

as detention, keeping children in at breaks to complete work, suspension as well as calling parents in to discuss discipline have failed dismally.

2.9 THE IMPACT OF POOR DISCIPLINE ON LEARNER PERFORMANCE

Since the banning of corporal punishment in all schools under the South African Schools Act (84 of 1996) discipline has become a major problem affecting many schools in South Africa. The problem contributes negatively towards effective teaching and learning; and this may lead to poor learner performance in schools. Masitsa (2008:234) states that poor discipline negatively affects on learners' academic performance. Managing discipline in schools is therefore of outmost importance to allow effective teaching and learning.

According to Rammala (2009:55), lack of discipline creates a negative attitude in learners towards educators, thus affecting the relationship that must be maintained to promote an undisrupted learning process. Time for lessons is used to address such learners and eventually the whole class is affected. The entire scenario results in time for learning being interrupted, and this leads to most learners academically under-performing (Marchesi & Martin 2002 as cited in Rammala 2009:55).

Success and good achievement and performance depend on the ability of the educator to maintain discipline and order (Mkhize 2002:146). Mkhize (2002:147) maintains that good performance by learners, be it academic or extracurricular activities, is not likely to take place without discipline in the school. Furthermore the researcher postulates that good discipline can thus be used to attain high standards of performance by learners in a school

situation. The study also revealed that it is hard for learners to attain good performance in schools where there is poor discipline.

In Legotlo, Maaga, Sebego, Van der Westhuizen, Masoge, Nieuwoudt and Steyn (2002:115), lack of learner discipline was viewed as the second cause of poor performance in schools. So, it is evident that poor discipline impacts negatively on learner performance.

2.10 THE ROLE OF EDUCATORS IN MANAGING DISCIPLINE

Educators have various roles in managing and maintaining discipline in schools. Educator's roles in managing discipline may include:

- to assist in developing a school discipline policy;
- to establish classroom rules together with the learners;
- to maintain discipline in the classroom;
- to assist in handling administrative matters relating to learner discipline;
- to liaise with the principal, other educators and the parents concerning the behaviour of the learner to strengthen school discipline;
- to work in collaboration with other educators in managing learners with behavioural problems;
- to implement the school discipline policy and school rules;
- to join forces with parents of learners with behavioural problems in helping the learners overcome their difficulties;
- to assist in reviewing the school discipline policy, school rules according to the needs of the learners, the school and the community; and
- to act as an advisor on learner discipline matters.

Adams (2004:72) highlights some of the educators' key roles in learner discipline which emanated from educators' responses:

- Educators must have a common goal - and all must make the effort to work together.
- A functional discipline policy must be implemented.
- The code of conduct must be enforced.
- Learners should be constantly reminded of the rules.
- All educators must be in their classes, not duplicate work, take money to the office or visit another educator during teaching time.
- There must be a collective effort from all staff members.
- Educators should get to the lines promptly.
- The consequences of transgressing should be communicated to the learners, and enforced.
- Educators must be exemplary and consistent in enforcing discipline.
- A proper learning environment should be created.
- Greater parental involvement should be encouraged.
- Learners should be praised for good behaviour.
- Stick to what has been decided.

Mtsweni (2008: 106) also outlines some of the educators' roles in managing discipline:

- Educators have the responsibility to maintain discipline at all times in schools and classrooms so that the education of learners flourishes without disruptive behaviour and offences.
- Educators have the greatest responsibility to inculcate among learners acceptable values of life, like co-operation, friendliness, love of justice, love of truth and appreciation of the contributions of others.

- Educators must help learners to develop social skills which are:
 - ✓ the ability to evaluate and use constructively the difference of opinions, abilities and personalities shown by any group;
 - ✓ the ability to differ from the opinions of another person without the disturbance of a friendly personal relationship;
 - ✓ the ability to arrive at a consensus on a controversial matter; and
 - ✓ the ability to play the role either of leader or follower.
- Educators are responsible for the moral development of learners in order for them to become law-abiding citizens.
- Classroom educators need to manage discipline in a caring, confident manner as the ability to maintain an orderly, disciplined classroom environment is essential if teaching and learning are to occur.

Mtsweni (2008:47) also adds that educators have a duty to handle disruptive learners attending their classes.

2.11 THE ROLE OF THE PRINCIPAL IN MANAGING DISCIPLINE

The role of the principal most importantly includes leadership and management. The principal has to equip educators to increase their (educators) knowledge about discipline and quality educator practice. He/she should become an executive officer of the school council. The principal, as executive officer of the school council, must ensure that sufficient and apt advice is provided to the council on educational, disciplinary and other matters. He/she should ensure that the decisions of the council are implemented appropriately. Therefore, it is apparent that the principal is

accountable for the overall leadership, management and development of the school.

The principal forms part of School Management Team (SMT) as indicated in Oosthuizen (2009:30). The principal as a member of SMT plays an important role in managing discipline at school in order to create a safe environment conducive to effective teaching and learning (Oosthuizen 2009:32). Du Plessis and Looek (2007:22) in Oosthuizen (2009:31) outline the responsibilities of the SMT as follows:

- Develop, implement and regularly review a school behaviour code;
- Ensure that learner behaviour is managed through procedures supported by a strong theoretical understanding of learner behaviour;
- Ensure that new staff, learners and their families are aware of the decision-making procedures;
- Promote structures at class and school levels to enable learners to be involved in the management of their behaviour;
- Promote opportunities for staff training and development;
- Increase learners' opportunities to experience intellectual, social and physical success; and
- Teach and model decision-making in groups.

2.12 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Grounded Theory Methodology (GTM) is pertinent for this study. The Grounded Theory Method was developed in the 1960s by two American sociologists, Barney Glaser and Anselm Strauss, as a new way to develop theory in their discipline. Glaser and Strauss worked out a way of developing theory empirically, 'from the bottom up', as a challenge to the more conventional way of

developing it rationally, 'from the top down'. This is supported by Mavetera and Kroeze (2009:4) who assert that the first proponents of GTM were Glaser and Strauss who, in 1967, used the method in their study of dying in-patients. According to these two researchers the Grounded Theory Method is defined as a research method that seeks to develop theory that is grounded in data. According to Olivier (2004) as cited in Mavetera and Kroeze (2009:4), the Grounded Theory Method starts by observing the field of interest, and theory is allowed to emerge (is grounded) from what is observed in the data. The data should be systematically gathered and analyzed as the study progresses (Olivier, 2004; Cornford and Smithson, 1996, as cited in Mavetera and Kroeze 2009:4).

According to Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2008:491), theory generation in qualitative data can be emergent, and grounded theory is an important method of theory generation. It is more inductive than content analysis, as the theories emerge from, rather than exist before, the data. Strauss and Corbin (1994:273) as cited in Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2008:491) emphasize that grounded theory is a general methodology for developing theory that is grounded in data systematically gathered and analysed. They further highlight several features of this definition:

- Theory is *emergent* rather than predefined and tested.
- Theory emerges from the *data* rather than vice versa.
- Theory generation is consequence of, and partner to, systematic data collection and analysis.
- Patterns and theories are implicit in data, waiting to be discovered.

According to Neuman (2006:157), a qualitative researcher develops theory during the data collection process. The author asserts that this more inductive method means that theory is built

from data or grounded in the data. Grounded theory makes qualitative research flexible and lets data and theory interact.

According to Strauss and Corbin (1990:23), as cited in Babbie and Mouton (2010:499), a grounded theory is one that is inductively derived from the study of the phenomenon it represents. That is, it is discovered, developed, and provisionally verified through systematic data pertaining to that phenomenon. Therefore, data collection, analysis and theory stand in reciprocal relationship with one other. One does not begin with a theory, and then prove it. They further indicate that grounded theory is an approach that allows us to study a relatively unknown social phenomenon around which no specified theory may exist yet. In the process, theory will be literally built from the ground up, brick by brick.

Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2008:492) also indicate that grounded theory starts with data, which is then analysed and reviewed to enable the theory to be generated from it; it is rooted in the data and little else. Therefore, to investigate effective ways of managing discipline in secondary schools, GTM will be employed. In my study, data will be collected first. Theory will consequently be derived from the collected data since theory is grounded in the data and emerges from it.

2.13 SUMMARY

In this chapter various aspects related to school discipline were discussed. The reviewed literature reveals that managing discipline is crucial for effective teaching and learning. Poor discipline has a negative impact on learner performance. So, it is imperative that all stakeholders (principal, educators, parents and learners) join forces in managing discipline in schools. According to the literature, educators should find more constructive ways of managing discipline, even though some are indicated in the guidelines of Department of Education (2000:25).

The roles of the principal and educators were also highlighted in this chapter. Although many causes of ill-discipline in schools have been reported, schools should proactively address such problems by developing a code of conduct for learners. The literature has also shown that the following strategies could be applied to reduce disciplinary problems in schools: creating a safe environment; effective classroom management; good educator-learner relationships; good curriculum; and parental involvement.

The next chapter will be used to describe the research design and methodology.

CHAPTER THREE

3. RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

3.1 INTRODUCTION

In the preceding chapter, literature on school discipline was discussed.

A qualitative research approach was chosen for this study and this chapter provides a description of the research design and methods. This includes the selection of participants, data collection methods, data analysis procedures, triangulation, reliability, validity and ethics of the study. In a nutshell, the literature review for qualitative research will be comprehensively discussed in this chapter.

3.2 RESEARCH DESIGN

3.2.1 Qualitative approach

This study employed a qualitative research approach. I collected data in face-to-face situations by interacting with selected respondents in their natural settings (e.g. conducting interviews) as supported by McMillan & Schumacher (2006: 315). I personally visited selected schools to collect data and interact with selected respondents to understand their real life situations. In my study the collected data was presented in the form of words.

According to Creswell (2007: 37) as cited in MacMillan and Schumacher (2010: 320),

Qualitative research begins with assumptions, a worldview, the possible use of a theoretical lens, and the study of

research problems inquiring into the meaning individuals or groups ascribe to a social or human problem. To study this problem, qualitative researchers use an emerging qualitative approach to inquiry, the collection of data in a natural setting sensitive to the people and places under study, and data analysis that is inductive and establishes patterns or themes. The final written report or presentation includes the voices of participants, the reflectivity of the researcher, and a complex description and interpretation of the problem.

Qualitative research relies on data in the form of words and researchers depend on description to express data (Badenhost 2010:92). Qualitative research designs emphasise gathering data on naturally occurring phenomena. The researcher must search and explore with a variety of methods until a deep understanding is achieved (McMillan & Schumacher 2006:26). The goal of qualitative research is therefore defined as describing and understanding rather than the explanation and prediction of human behaviour (Babbie and Mouton 2010:646).

A qualitative approach stems from an anti-positivistic, interpretative approach, is idiographic and thus holistic in nature, and aims mainly to understand social phenomena and the meaning that people attach to everyday life (Fouché & Delport 2003: 79). I aimed to understand human phenomena and investigate the meaning that respondents gave to events relating to discipline management. In qualitative research the researcher attempts to understand people in terms of their own definition of their world (Mouton 1996:130). Qualitative research describes and analyses people's individual and collective social actions, beliefs, thoughts, and perceptions (McMillan & Schumacher 2006:315). So, I chose a qualitative approach to explore the behaviour, beliefs, perceptions and experiences of the participants regarding the management of school discipline in the absence of corporal punishment. A

qualitative research approach enabled me to understand the social phenomenon from the participants' perspectives. McMillan and Schumacher (2006:12) concur that qualitative research is more concerned with understanding the social phenomenon from the participants' perspectives.

In qualitative research, the investigator usually works with a wealth of rich descriptive data, collected through methods such as participant observation, in-depth interviewing and document analysis (Mouton 1996:169). In qualitative research, researchers tend to keep field notes as they participate in the fieldwork often in natural field settings (Mouton 2008:107). Qualitative research is interactive, face-to-face research, which requires a relatively extensive amount of time to interview, systematically observe, and record processes as they occur naturally (McMillan & Schumacher 2006:340). In qualitative research the natural and subjective components of the sample are emphasised. It is for this reason that qualitative research is also referred to as naturalistic research (Mouton 1996:130).

Moreover, the research strategy is usually of a contextual nature. This implies focus on the individual case (or small number of cases) in its specific context of meanings and significance (Mouton 1996:169). Since I chose a qualitative approach the focus was on a small number of individuals as opposed to the large numbers of participants in quantitative approach. So, the focus was on four principals and twenty-four educators.

3.2.2 Characteristics of a qualitative research approach

According to MacMillan and Schumacher (2010: 321), qualitative research is characterised by the following features:

- **Natural settings:** In qualitative research behaviour is studied as it occurs naturally. Qualitative researchers tend to collect data in the field at the site where participants experience the issue or problem under study (Creswell 2009:175). Therefore, research is conducted in the natural setting of social actors (Babbie & Mouton 2010:270).
- **Context sensitivity:** The situational context is very important in understanding behaviour. This is based on the belief that human actions are strongly influenced by the setting in which they occur. The main concern is to understand social action in terms of its specific context (ideographic motive) rather than attempting to generalise to some theoretical population (Babbie & Mouton 2010:270).
- **Direct data collection:** Qualitative researchers collect data directly from the source. They collect data themselves through examining documents, observing behaviour, or interviewing participants (Creswell 2009:175). So, the qualitative researcher is seen as the “main instrument” in the research process (Babbie & Mouton 2010:270).
- **Rich narrative descriptions:** Qualitative research comprises detailed narratives that provide in-depth understanding of behaviour. Every detail that is recorded is thought to contribute to a better understanding of behaviour. The primary aim of qualitative research is in-depth (“thick”) descriptions and understanding of actions and events (Babbie & Mouton 2010:270).
- **Process orientation:** The qualitative researcher wants to know how and why behaviour occurs. The focus is therefore on process rather than outcome (Babbie & Mouton 2010:270).

- **Inductive data analysis:** Generalizations are induced from synthesizing gathered information; this means the data is gathered first and then synthesized inductively to generate generalizations. Qualitative researchers build their patterns, categories, and themes from the bottom up, by organising the data into increasingly more abstract units of information (Creswell 2009:175). This inductive process illustrates working back and forth between the themes and the database until the researcher has established a comprehensive set of themes. This implies that the research process is often inductive in its approach, resulting in the generation of new hypotheses and theories (Babbie & Mouton 2010:270).
- **Participant perspectives:** The focus is on participants' understanding, descriptions, labels, and meanings. The goal in qualitative research is to understand participants from their own point of view, in their own voices. In qualitative research the actor's perspective (the "insider" or "emic" view) is emphasised (Babbie & Mouton 2010:270). Therefore, in the entire qualitative research process the researcher keeps a focus on learning the meaning that the participants hold about the problem or issue, not the meaning that the researchers bring to the research or writers express in the literature (Creswell 2009:175).
- **Emergent design:** The design evolves and changes as the study takes place. This means that the initial plan for the research cannot be tightly prescribed, and all phases of the process may change or shift after the researcher enters the field and begins to collect data (Creswell 2009:175). For example, the questions may change, the forms of data collection may shift, and the individuals studied and the sites visited may be modified.

- **Complex understanding and explanation:** Understandings and explanations are complex, with multiple perspectives. Central to qualitative research is the belief that the world is complex and that there are few simple explanations for human behaviour. The methods that investigate behaviour, as well as the explanations, need to be sufficiently complex to capture the true meaning of what has occurred. This leads researchers to examine multiple perspectives. This involves reporting multiple perspectives, identifying the many factors involved in a situation, and generally sketching the larger picture that emerges (Creswell 2009:175).

3.3 RESEARCH METHODS

A variety of techniques were applied for gathering information. In this study, individual interviews, focus group interviews and non-participant observation were employed.

3.3.1 Literature review

A literature review is a piece of writing that is a systematic, critical evaluation and synthesis of existing scholarly works, studies, theories and current thinking on a given research subject or area (Gilbert 2008:66). A literature review is based on the assumption that knowledge accumulates and that people learn from and build on what others have done (Neuman 2006:111). This implies that this data collection method deals with existing data. Both primary and secondary sources were consulted in order to establish what other scholars have already gathered with regard to the study. Mouton (2008:87) states that a researcher should start with a review of the existing scholarship or available body of knowledge to see how other scholars have investigated the research problem that she/he is interested in. So, the sources were consulted to acquire knowledge pertaining to school

discipline (management and maintenance of discipline in schools). A review of literature was used to document the importance of the topic (McMillan & Schumacher 2010:96). A qualitative review simply introduces the purpose of the study and the initial broad questions that will be reformulated during data collection (McMillan & Schumacher 2006:92).

Neuman (2006:111) highlights four goals of literature review:

- **To demonstrate a familiarity with a body of knowledge and establish credibility.** A review tells a reader that the researcher knows the major issues. A good review increases a reader's confidence in the researcher's professional competence, ability, and background.
- **To show the path of prior research and how a current project is linked to it.** A review outlines the direction of research on a question and shows the development of knowledge. A good review places the research project in a context and demonstrates its relevance by making connections to a body of knowledge.
- **To integrate and summarise what is known in an area. A review pulls together and synthesizes different results.** A good review points out areas where prior studies agree, where they disagree, and where major questions remain. It collects what is known up to a point in time and indicates the direction for further research.
- **To learn from others and stimulate new ideas.** A review tells what others have found so that a researcher can benefit from the efforts of others. A good review identifies blind alleys and suggests hypotheses for replication. It divulges procedures,

techniques, and research designs worth copying so that a researcher can better focus hypotheses and gain new insights.

As a researcher I had to ensure that the anticipated goals were met.

Gilbert (2008:65) also highlights additional aims of literature review:

- Identify what has been achieved and what needs to be done regarding to the research area.
- Outline all the factors or variables impinging on the research question.
- Provide a contextual framework for the research question.
- Explain the methods or research processes used and their effectiveness in previous studies.
- Explore the relationships between the theories and the practices in the research field under study.
- Provide a rationale for the research question or problem under study.
- Demonstrate a deep knowledge of the history and breadth of the subject under study as well as how the intellectual field around it has developed.
- Display a knowledge and mastery of the field's vocabulary in discussing the research question.

The literature review as a data collection method was employed in my study for the following basic reasons as identified by Gilbert (2008:64):

- to learn as much as I can about my research topic;
- to develop the searching and analytical skills necessary in a research project; and
- to demonstrate this knowledge through a coherent and systematic text that helps to link what I have learned from previous researches to what I am researching for my own project.

3.3.2 Interviews

An interview is a personal exchange of information between an interviewer and an interviewee (Ruane 2008:147). This implies that it is a two-way conversation initiated by the interviewer for the specific purpose of obtaining research relevant information, and focused by him or her on content specified by research objectives of systematic description, prediction, or explanation (Cannell & Kahn 1968 as cited in Cohen, Manion & Morrison 2008:351). In this study I conducted face-to-face interviews. I personally visited sampled secondary schools to interview educators and principals. Semi-structured interviews were conducted whereby major questions were asked the same way each time, but their sequence and wording could be altered depending on participants' responses. The interview schedule was prepared beforehand.

Interviews have various purposes, as indicated in Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2008:351):

- to evaluate or assess a person in some respect;
- to select or promote an employee;
- to effect therapeutic change, as in the psychiatric interview;
- to test or develop hypotheses;
- to gather data, as in surveys or experimental situations;
- to sample respondents' opinions, as in doorstep interviews;

- interviews may be used as the principal means of gathering information having direct bearing on the research objectives;
- it may be used to test hypotheses or to suggest new ones; or as an explanatory device to help identify variables and relationships; and
- it may be used in conjunction with other methods in a research undertaking.

Kvale (1996:30), as cited in Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2008:355), indicates key characteristics of qualitative research interviews, which should do the following:

- Engage, understand and interpret the key feature of the lifeworlds of the participants.
- Use natural language to gather and understand qualitative knowledge.
- Be able to reveal and explore the nuanced descriptions of the lifeworlds of the participants.
- Elicit descriptions of specific situations and actions, rather than generalities.
- Adopt a deliberate openness to new data and phenomena, rather than being too pre-structured.
- Focus on specific ideas and themes, i.e. have direction, but avoid being too tightly structured.
- Accept the ambiguity and contradictions of situations where they occur in participants, if this is a fair reflection of the ambiguous and contradictory situation in which they find themselves.
- Accept that the interview may provoke new insights and changes in the participants themselves.
- Regard interviews as an interpersonal encounter, with all that this entails.
- Be a positive and enriching experience for all participants.

3.3.2.1 *Individual interviews*

Semi-structured/in-depth interviews were conducted. In-depth interviewing is a qualitative research technique that involves conducting intensive individual interviews with a small number of respondents to explore their perspectives on a particular idea, program, or situation (Boyce & Neale 2006:3). The authors further indicate that in-depth interviews are useful when you want detailed information about a person's thoughts and behaviours or want to explore new issues in depth. Semi-structured interviews were conducted whereby major questions were asked the same way each time, but their sequence and wording could be altered depending on participants' responses.

In-depth individual interviews are open-response questions to obtain data of participant meanings – how individuals conceive of their world and how they explain or make sense of the important events in their lives (McMillan & Schumacher 2006:350). The in-depth interviews were conducted with individual participants selected from sampled schools to understand their life experiences in terms of school discipline in the absence of corporal punishment, as expressed in their own words. Furthermore, as Ragin and Amoroso (2011:122) indicate, interviews reveal how people in the research setting make sense of their lives, work, and relationships.

In my case four individual interviews were conducted. This meant that four principals of the sampled schools were interviewed individually.

3.3.2.2 *Focus group interviews*

A focus group interview consists of six to ten participants. These participants get together to discuss and express their views on discipline management in their schools. I used focus group

interviews to obtain a better understanding of the problem. In the focus group interviews participants discussed how discipline has been managed in their schools since the abolition of corporal punishment. They also discussed methods which they found useful in managing discipline. Participants are normally selected because they have certain characteristics in common that relate to the topic of the focus group (Greeff 2003:305), so the interaction with the group will therefore lead to data and outcome. I facilitated the interview skilfully by ensuring that participants had something to say and felt comfortable to say it. Focus group interviews were used to empower participants to speak out, and in their own words. I also ensured that sensitive questions were avoided to allow them to participate freely without any fear.

The participants interact with each other rather than with the interviewer, such that the views of the participants can emerge and the interaction with the group leads to data and outcomes (Cohen, Manion & Morrison 2008:376). McMillan and Schumacher (2006:360) state that by creating a social environment in which group members are stimulated by one another's perceptions and ideas, the researcher can increase the quality and richness of data through a more efficient strategy than one-on-one interviewing. In this study, a collective view on the management of discipline was gathered through focus group interviews.

Four focus group interviews consisting of six participants were conducted (six participants were selected from each school).

3.3.3 Non-participant observation

Observation is a way for the researcher to see and hear what is occurring naturally in the research site (McMillan & Schumacher 2010:350). In my study I remained an outside (non-participant) observer. A non-participant observer remains a listener; and

attempts to observe people without interacting with them. I collected the data by observing the situation as it naturally occurred, for example by observing how learners behaved within the school premises and verbal exchanges between educators and learners. I also observed and recorded participants' body language, facial expressions and tone of the voice during the interviews to assist in analysing the verbal data.

3.4 TRIANGULATION

Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2008:141) define triangulation as the use of two or more methods of data collection in the study of some aspect of human behaviour. They further indicate that triangular techniques attempt to map out, or explain more fully, the richness and complexity of human behaviour by studying it from more than one standpoint. Triangulation is also called a multi-method approach, which simply means the use of multiple methods. In my study, triangulation was achieved by applying various data collection methods, namely the literature study, individual interviews, focus group interviews and non-participant observation. All these research methods were applied to address the research problem. Using different methods assisted me to build an in depth understanding of meaning.

3.5 SAMPLING

Collectively, the group of subjects or participants from whom the data is collected is referred to as a sample (McMillan & Schumacher 2006: 119). According to these authors, the sample can be selected from a larger group of persons, identified as the population. In this study the population was secondary schools and the samples were educators and principals. Most importantly,

the population should be identified first and then subsequently the sample. This process of selecting participants is referred to as sampling.

The idea behind qualitative research is to purposefully select participants or sites (or documents or visual material) that will best help the researcher understand the problem and the research question (Creswell 2009:178). I therefore employed purposeful sampling in this study. Accordingly, four secondary schools were purposefully selected for this investigation: two schools with good grade 12 results and two with poor grade 12 results for the past 5 years. I chose these two types of schools because in schools that produce better results, effective teaching and learning is taking place due to good discipline, while poor results are the end products of ineffective teaching and learning resulting from poor discipline. Schools with disciplinary problems are unlikely to produce good results. Secondary schools were deliberately chosen for this study because it is evident that many secondary schools in South Africa are experiencing disciplinary problems.

Four principals and twenty-four educators (six educators from each sampled secondary school) of secondary schools within Sekhukhune district were selected. Principals and educators were relevant for this investigation into alternative ways of managing discipline in the absence of corporal punishment. McMillan and Schumacher (2010:326) state that researchers search for information-rich key informants, groups, places or events to study; and these samples are chosen because they are likely to be knowledgeable and informative about the phenomena the researcher is investigating. I therefore chose principals and educators for the purpose of my research because they have in-depth knowledge about school discipline and are involved daily in the issues of discipline.

3.6 DATA ANALYSIS

McMillan and Schumacher (2006:364) define qualitative data analysis as primarily an inductive process of organising data into categories and identifying patterns or relationships among the categories. Categories and patterns emerge from the data, rather than being imposed on them prior to collection. The authors further explain that qualitative analysis is a relatively systematic process of coding, categorising, and interpreting data to provide explanations of a single phenomenon of interest. Creswell (2009:183) indicates that the process of data analysis involves making sense out of text data, preparing the data for analysis, conducting different analyses, moving deeper and deeper into understanding the data, representing the data, and arriving at an interpretation of the larger meaning of the data.

Qualitative data analysis in this study involved organising, accounting for and explaining the data; in short, making sense of the data in terms of participants' definitions of the situation, noting patterns, themes, categories and regularities (Cohen, Manion & Morrison 2008:183). De Vos (2003:339) supports the view that data analysis is the process of bringing order, structure and meaning to the mass of collected data.

During and after the process of data collection I identified and listed the categories and reduced them into themes, since data analysis involves "breaking up" the data into manageable themes, trends and relationships. Data collected was coded, categorised, and interpreted to provide explanations of the single phenomenon of interest.

Creswell (2009: 185) identifies six steps for qualitative data analysis while McMillan and Schumacher (2010:369) identify five steps. These are briefly discussed below.

Six steps for qualitative data analysis by Creswell (2009: 185)

Step 1: Organize and prepare the data for analysis

This involves transcribing interviews, optically scanning material, typing up field notes, or sorting and arranging the data into different types depending on the sources of information.

Step 2: Read through all the data

A first step is to obtain a general sense of the information and to reflect on its overall meaning. In this stage the researcher is trying to figure out the answers to the following:

- What general ideas are participants expressing?
- What is the tone of the ideas?
- What is the impression of the overall depth, credibility, and use of the information?

Sometimes qualitative researchers write notes in the margins or start recording general thoughts about the data at this stage.

Step 3: Begin detailed analysis with coding process.

Coding is the process of organising the material into chunks or segments of the text before bringing meaning to information. It involves taking text data gathered during data collection, segmenting sentences (or paragraphs) into categories, and labelling those categories with a term, often a term based in the actual language of the participant (called *in vivo* term).

Step 4: Use the coding process to generate description of the setting or people as well as categories or themes for analysis.

Description involves a detailed rendering of information about people, places, or events in a setting. Researchers can generate codes for this description, and then use the coding to generate a small number of themes or categories, perhaps five to seven categories for a research study. These themes are the ones that

appear as major findings in qualitative studies and are often used to create headings in the findings sections of studies. They should display multiple perspectives from individuals and be supported by diverse quotations and specific evidence.

Step 5: Advance how the description and themes will be represented in the qualitative narrative.

The most popular approach is to use a narrative passage to convey the findings of the analysis. This might be a discussion that mentions a chronology of events, the detailed discussion of several themes (complete with subthemes, specific illustrations, multiple perspectives from individuals, and quotations) or discussion with interconnecting themes.

Step 6: A final step in data analysis involves making an interpretation or meaning of the data.

Interpretation in qualitative research means that the researcher draws meaning from the findings of data analysis. This meaning may result in lessons learned, information to compare with the literature, or personal experiences. These lessons could be the researcher's personal interpretation, couched in the understanding that the inquirer brings to the study from her/his own culture, history, and experiences. It could also be a meaning derived from a comparison of the findings with information gleaned from the literature or theories. In this way, the findings confirm past information or diverge from it. It can also suggest new questions that need to be asked – questions raised by the data and analysis that the inquirer had not foreseen earlier in the study.

Five steps for qualitative data analysis by McMillan and Schumacher (2010:369):

(a) Data organisation

In this phase data collected during interviews is organised and analysed later. Organising the data separates it into a few workable units. The interview responses are organised separately to be compared later in the process.

(b) Data transcription

I transcribed data collected during interviews and observations to convert it into a format that would facilitate analysis.

(c) Coding

Data coding begins by identifying small pieces of data that stand alone. These data parts, called segments, divide the dataset. Segments are then analysed to come up with codes so that each segment is labelled by at least one code (some segments have more than one code). In this phase data needs to be coded to provide meaning to the segment for easy interpretation.

(d) Forming categories / themes

Categories are entities comprised of grouped codes. A single category is used to give meaning to codes that are combined. I divided the data collected into categories as data analysis involves “breaking up” the data into manageable themes, trends and relationships; to show similarities and dissimilarities for easy identification.

(e) Discovering patterns

A pattern is a relationship among categories. In searching for patterns, researchers try to understand the complex links among various aspects of people’s situations, mental processes, beliefs, and actions. The major pattern(s) serves as the framework for reporting the findings and organising the reports. The patterns

assisted me to consider what was really important and meaningful in the data.

Both these two sets of qualitative data analysis steps served as guidelines for my research project.

3.7 ETHICAL CONSIDERATION

Ethics are sets of guidelines, principles and codes which are used to guide the behaviour of the researcher when conducting research (Merrill & West 2009:168). According to May (2001:67), as cited in Merrill and West (2009:168), the development and application of research ethics is important not only to maintain public confidence and to try to protect individuals and groups from the illegitimate use of research findings, but also to ensure the status of the research project as a legitimate and worthwhile undertaking.

The domain of research ethics is concerned with the protection of the rights and interest of research participants (Mouton 1996:42). According to McMillan and Schumacher (2006:16), the researcher is ethically responsible for protecting the rights and welfare of the subjects who participate in a study, which involves issues of physical and mental discomfort, harm, and danger. I therefore ensured that the planned research was ethically accountable and that it conformed to acceptable norms and values. I also ensured the protection of the rights and welfare of the participants in this study.

The following research ethics were taken into account in my study:

3.7.1 Informed consent and permission

The principle of informed consent is about the right of individuals to determine for themselves whether or not they want to be part of

a research project (Ruane 2008:19). More specifically, informed consent refers to the right of research participants to be fully informed about all aspects of a research project that might influence their decision to participate.

According to Ragin and Amoroso (2011:89), to prove that individuals are entering research studies voluntarily and adequately informed, researchers are often required to obtain informed consent from all participants or the participants' legally authorized representatives. Furthermore, to obtain informed consent, researchers must clearly communicate the research procedure, purposes, risks, and benefits to the participants in "jargon-free" language. Also, researchers must clearly communicate that participation is voluntary and that the participant can withdraw at any time. Merrill and West (2009:171) also concur that it is essential that all participants enter the research process voluntarily and willingly through 'informed consent' and that they are aware of their rights as participants.

In my study permission to conduct the research was obtained from the Department of Basic Education at district level, the schools and the participants. In gaining permission I gave participants assurances of confidentiality and anonymity and described the intended use of the data. The participants also completed and signed informed consent forms as proof that they had been informed of the study details.

3.7.2 Privacy, confidentiality and anonymity

The right to privacy refers to our ability to control when and under what conditions others will have access to information about us (Ruane 2008:22). A subject's right to privacy requires the researcher to pay attention to three different privacy issues:

- The sensitivity of the information being solicited;
- the location or setting of the research; and
- the disclosure of a study's findings.

The researcher should respect and protect participants' privacy. Access to participants' characteristics, responses, behaviour, and other information is restricted to the researcher (McMillan & Schumacher 2010:121). So privacy is ensured by applying three practices: anonymity, confidentiality and appropriate storing of data.

To meet the promise of anonymity, the collection of data is structured so that the researcher cannot link specific information with the individuals who provide it (Ruane 2008:24). Furthermore, the author indicates that the promise of confidentiality is an assurance by the researcher that the information provided by participants will never be linked to them publicly. So, I ensured that the information provided by participants would in no way reveal their identity, as supported by Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2008:64). I assured the participants that they would remain anonymous. Data collected was definitely not being linked to participants' names. As a researcher, I treated confidential information as such. I allowed no one access the collected data or the names of participants. The participant's right to privacy was respected and protected by also informing them that they had the right to refuse to take part in the research; to limit time needed for participation; to refuse to answer any questions and not to be interviewed during mealtimes or at night.

3.8 RELIABILITY

Reliability is a matter of whether a particular technique, applied repeatedly to the same object, would yield the same result each time (Babbie & Mouton 2010:119). Qualitative reliability indicates

that the researcher's approach is consistent across different researchers and different projects (Gibbs 2007 as cited in Creswell 2009:190). Qualitative reliability also implies that the same research could yield the same results if conducted by different researchers or the same researcher repeatedly. So, reliability is achieved if the research when repeated could yield the same results. According to Neuman (2006:196), reliability means dependability or consistency. In my study a variety of techniques (interviews, non-participant observation and document studies) was employed to record my observations consistently. Thus, the use of triangulation addressed the reliability of the findings.

To check whether my findings are consistent or reliable the following reliability procedures served as a guideline in my study, as stated by Gibbs (2007), cited in Creswell (2009:190):

- Checking transcripts to make sure that they do not contain obvious mistakes made during transcription.
- Making sure that there is not a drift in the definition of codes, a shift in the meaning of the codes during the process of coding. This can be accomplished by constantly comparing data with the codes and their definitions.

3.9 VALIDITY

The term validity refers to the extent to which an empirical measure adequately reflects the real meaning of the concept under consideration (Babbie & Mouton 2010:122). Qualitative validity means that the researcher checks for the accuracy of the findings by employing certain procedures (Creswell 2009:190). Validity is basically based on determining whether the findings are accurate from the researcher's and the participants' perspective.

Therefore, validity refers to the degree to which the interpretations have mutual meaning between the participants and the researcher. Neuman (2006:196) postulates that validity means truthfulness. So, qualitative researchers are more interested in authenticity than in the idea of a single version of truth. The author further explains that authenticity means giving fair, honest, and balanced account of social life from the viewpoint of someone who lives it every day.

McMillan & Schumacher (2010:330) suggest strategies that enhance validity. In my study the following strategies were utilised to heighten validity.

- **Prolonged and persistent field work:** Non-participant observation, focus group interviews and in-depth interviews were conducted in the natural settings of the participants to reflect lived experience. The lengthy data collection period assists the researcher to develop in-depth understanding of the phenomenon under study. The more the researcher connects with the participants in their natural setting, the more accurate or valid will be the findings.
- **Multi-method strategies:** Various data collection methods were employed to allow triangulation of data across inquiry techniques. Different strategies may yield distinct insights about the topic of interest and increase the trustworthiness of findings.
- **Participant language and verbatim accounts:** Interviews questions were phrased unequivocally to permit maximal participation. The participants' viewpoints were expressed in their own words.

- **Low-inference:** Concrete, precise descriptions from field notes and interview elaborations are the hallmarks of qualitative research and the principal method for identifying patterns in the data. This implies that the researcher records precise, almost literal, and detailed descriptions of people and situations. The researcher cautiously employs terms that are understood by the participants.
- **Mechanically recorded data:** I utilised a tape recorder during data collection. So, situational aspects that affected the data record were noted for the data to be usable.

3.10 SUMMARY

This chapter has provided a detailed discussion of qualitative research design and methodology as well as the qualitative research methodology used to collect data in this study on ways of managing discipline in secondary schools. The data collection methods included focus group interviews, in-depth interviews and non-participant observation. Data analysis procedures were also outlined.

The next chapter will present the findings of the research as well as data analysis and interpretation.

CHAPTER FOUR

4. FINDINGS OF THE EMPIRICAL RESEARCH

4.1 INTRODUCTION

Chapter 3 provided a detailed discussion of qualitative research design and methodology.

This chapter discusses the findings of the research and gives a detailed description and analysis of the data and its interpretation. In addition, data collected through interviews and non-participant observations is discussed comprehensively. It should however be noted that the individual and focus group interviews conducted with participants were corroborated with non-participant observations whereby body language, facial expression and tone of voice were observed and recorded to assist in analysing the verbal data. The respondents' responses are presented in italics to indicate that it was their exact words. The discussion will be based on the following themes:

4.2 RESPONDENTS' PERCEPTIONS ON ALTERNATIVES TO CORPORAL PUNISHMENT

4.2.1 Educators' perceptions on alternatives to corporal punishment

According to the data collected, educators displayed diverse understanding of alternative methods to corporal punishment. Some educators are not aware that there are alternatives to corporal punishment provided for them to employ. This is supported by Matoti (2010:577), who indicates that educators continually lament the fact that no alternatives to corporal

punishment were put in place by the National Department of Education. They indicate that this is due to minimal and sporadic training on alternatives to corporal punishment (Le Roux 2005:7). Educator 3 in School A agrees: *“I don’t remember seeing the document which talks about alternatives to corporal punishment”*.

Educator 4 in School B indicates that alternatives to corporal punishment *“are not well defined to say if the child has done this you need this type of punishment”*. Some educators maintain that these alternatives might work or they might not work, depending on the environment learners find themselves in. Educator 6 in School A states: *“It depends with the environment at times, where the school is situated and the type of learners and discipline; for instance how the parents instil discipline outside the school”*. Educator 1 in School D also confirms this: *“Sometimes the alternatives do work and sometimes don’t work; it depends on the type of learners and kinds of friends”*. She adds: *“We’ve got three types of learners. We’ve got learners who are willing to be corrected; learners who are habitual and very unruly learners. So, they work sometimes in other cases but in some other cases they don’t work”*. Some educators believe that *“the issue of discipline by the government to the teachers is a witch-hunt”* as Educator 3 in School B highlighted.

The respondents’ submissions above display the frustration educators experience on learner discipline due to minimal training. It follows that educators need to be thoroughly trained on alternative methods to corporal punishment. Educators also need to acquaint themselves with governmental documents on discipline such as the manual *“The alternatives to corporal punishment”*. They would then be conversant with alternative methods to corporal punishment as the manual clearly outlines disciplinary measures to be employed when dealing with misconduct.

4.2.2 Principals' perceptions on alternatives to corporal punishment

The principals interviewed also demonstrated diverse knowledge and understanding on alternative methods to corporal punishment. Unlike the educators interviewed they were more conversant with these alternative methods. According to the principals interviewed some of the alternative methods to corporal punishment are effective while some are not. This was explained by Principal 4 who commented that, *"methods like suspension and detention don't work for us"*. Principal 2 suggested that *"alternatives to corporal punishment are working if closely monitored and if we work collectively as the staff and consistency also assist."* The principal shows the importance of consistency in applying school rules and policies.

Principal 3 argued that intentions of alternative measures are good but the problem is that the manual *"Alternatives to corporal punishment"* was simply presented to educators without training. Principal 4 was also discouraged by the complexity of the implementation of these measures as he asserted that *"they are time consuming"*. The respondent argues that alternatives *"don't bear the immediate results"* unlike corporal punishment *"which goes mainly for behaviour change and that comes solely where the pain inflicted is almost immediate because you feel it"* as Educator 1 in School B contends. These two respondents are still in favour of the use of corporal punishment as they argue that it bears immediate results. According to them the alternatives are less effective.

Principal 4 further complained about educators' attitude towards these alternatives and he also believes *"our attitude as Blacks towards this type of discipline, it is very awkward. In case of White learners they are already disciplined and you won't even*

encounter such problems that we are encountering at our schools". The latter respondent infers that alternatives to corporal punishment are meant for White schools and vice versa. I therefore conclude that the respondent also implies that White learners are more disciplined than Black learners. According to what I have learnt the alternatives to corporal punishment are meant for all schools in South Africa.

From the data collected there was also an emphasis on training on alternatives to corporal punishment. The respondents mentioned that some alternatives are ineffective. They also highlighted the need for teamwork and consistency in applying rules and policies within the school.

4.3 DISCIPLINARY PROBLEMS IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS

4.3.1 Disciplinary problems experienced by schools

Through interviews and observation I have learned that disciplinary problems vary from school to school but some disciplinary problems are experienced by all schools. This is supported by Masekoameng (2010:13), who argues that disciplinary problems are almost the same in the different schools, although the intensity may differ from school to school. The researcher further asserts that this is the reason why authors in many parts of the world keep on mentioning the same types of disciplinary problems. These disciplinary problems hamper the smooth running of schools. The problems contribute negatively to effective teaching and learning; and this may lead to poor learner performance. This is emphasised by Masitsa (2008:234), who declares that poor discipline has a negative impact on learners' academic performance. Consequently, this is taxing, as Educator 1 in School C states: *"sometimes we are compelled to leave other*

learners who need our assistance and concentrate on learners with disciplinary problems". This research has revealed that schools experience the following disciplinary problems:

4.3.1.1 Late coming

All educators that I interviewed complained about late coming. Educator 1 in School A described late coming as *"the most obvious disciplinary problem at school"*. This information suggests the possibility that this might be a case in most secondary schools in the district.

4.3.1.2 Absenteeism

The research has revealed that absenteeism is a common occurrence in most secondary schools in the district. Educator 6 in School A mentioned that most learners from Grade 10–12 are absent on Fridays. Educator 3 supported this by stating that *"I can say is community values as educator 6 has already said that most learners become absent on Fridays especially boys because when someone is dead within the community they have to prepare the grave of the deceased"*. It is perceived that girls are also mostly absent on Fridays to prepare food for the boys so that when they come back from the graveyard they can have something to eat. Educator 1 in School D also states that *"Sometimes they don't come to school or they come late for they were supposed to collect social grant"*. The educators that I interviewed demonstrated the extent of the seriousness of the problem of absenteeism especially on Fridays and on social grant days. These disciplinary problems have a negative effect on learner performance, as learners miss some of the crucial lessons at school.

4.3.1.3 *Neglect of academic work*

The research has also exposed that some learners at school neglect their school work. Educator 3 in School A states “*Learners do not do their work*”. Educator 4 in School B complained of learners who do not submit the work given. Schools C and D also had the same problems of learners not completing their academic work and failing to submit the given tasks. This research has shown learners’ lack of commitment to their (learners’) work which leads to the dysfunctionality of many rural secondary schools, specifically in this district.

4.3.1.4 *Possession of cell phones at school*

I observed that learners have a tendency of bringing cell phones to school. The educators complained about learners who deliberately carry cell phones to school. They indicated that learners play music and games with the phones during school hours. Educator 2 states: “*They are bringing cell phones to school and playing music with their earphones*”. So, it is evident that more effort is put into their cell phones rather than on learning. This may definitely distract their concentration. As such, this hampers with the smooth running of the school and effective teaching and learning.

4.3.1.5 *Illegal substances*

One of the major challenges in some schools is that learners bring drugs and alcohol to school. This is supported by Lekalakala (2007:77), who indicates that the use of drugs and alcohol in schools is one of the factors that cause misconduct. Educator 3 in School B mentions: “*I remember that boy who came with liquor at school and was supposed to stand in front of everyone at the assembly and apologise for having brought liquor at the school*”.

premises". Educator 1 in School D reported suspicions of drug abuse because of these learners' unruliness. This is supported by Mtsweni (2008:85), who mentions that substance abuse by learners during school hours is another contributing factor to the general lack of learner discipline. So, there is a need to curb the problem of substance abuse at schools as it contributes significantly to the lack of discipline within the school.

4.3.1.6 *Illegal objects*

Through this research it was revealed that some learners bring dangerous weapons to school. Educator 3 in School C states: *"Some learners bring illegal objects to school e.g. knives"*. Matoti (2010:577) confirms that learners bring dangerous weapons to school, endangering everybody's lives. In such a situation it is unlikely for effective teaching and learning to take place. One of the goals of discipline at school is to create an environment conducive to learning and teaching; and to ensure the safety of staff and learners (Joubert, De Waal & Rossouw 2005:208). Gaustad (1991:17) affirms that the safety of learners and staff must come first.

4.3.1.7 *Bunking classes*

Educator 5 in School B mentions that bunking classes is one of the problems that affect their school. Educator 4 in School B highlights the fact that learners do bunk classes and the importance of teamwork in managing discipline: *"Some of the educators will just bypass learners sitting outside bunking classes. We are supposed to work together as administration and educators"*. This shows a lack of teamwork in discipline management. Teamwork plays a vital role in the management of discipline; a lack of teamwork in schools will lead to an escalation in disciplinary problems. This will influence the schools' efficacy.

4.3.1.8 *Not adhering to dress codes*

Educator 2 in School B says: *“Learners are not abiding to dress codes. They might be in uniform but not dressed in an acceptable way. They do not dress properly as expected”*. This is supported by Subbiah (2004:65), who mentions that learners wear their uniforms generally in a very disrespectful manner. These learners display disrespect for authority within the school which may ruin the reputation of the school.

4.3.1.9 *Bullying*

Bullying is one of the major problems that affect most schools in South Africa. According to Bear, Cavalier and Manning (2005:42), bullying is an issue that has gained great attention among the media, educators and legislatures. Bullying is a serious problem, especially because victims of bullying are at high risk of experiencing academic, emotional, social, and behavioural difficulties (Ellias & Zins 2004 as cited in Bear, Cavalier & Manning 2005:42). Educator 3 in School C states that some learners in the school have a tendency of bullying other learners. This behaviour should be discouraged as it affects effective teaching and learning, and this will beyond doubt impact negatively on learner performance within the school.

4.3.1.10 *Teenage pregnancy*

Educators are really frustrated by the issue of pregnant teenage learners at school. This is emphasised by one of the participants in Lekganyane (2011:45) who comments as follows: *“Every year at this school we have about 10 to 15 teenage girls who fall pregnant. This really frustrates us as educators”*. Educator 4 in School B suggests: *“I don’t mind how many pregnant girls are there at school but why can’t we transfer them to another school*

rather than being in the same school". He adds: "I heard that in one school in this province there were fifty learners who were pregnant. The first one became pregnant and nothing happened, the second one, the third one and now they became fifty. Now when the educator is teaching they are just yawning. It is a big problem you know". Educator 2 in School B supports the previous respondent by stating: "Why can't they have their own college so that any girl who is pregnant can be transferred to the college". Educator 1 in School D concurs: "We also have a high rate of teenage pregnancy". It is apparent that most learners do not protect themselves against sexually transmitted diseases. The ignorance displayed by these learners is taxing and distressing, especially for educators, because they are expected to be benign and supportive towards such learners. The situation causes ineffectiveness within the school.

4.3.1.11 Insolence

The research shows that there is a decline of respect for educators in South African schools. Matoti (2010:577) confirms that learners do not respect educators. Furthermore, educators in South Africa are generally unhappy, demoralised and exhausted (Naong 2007:291). The situation is really frustrating; Educator 3 in School A indicates that some learners compare their (educators') achievements with those of their parents (learners) and then this becomes a stepping stone for disrespecting them. Educator 4 in School B laments: *"One day there was a girl; I said to her can you please sweep this classroom? She said, "No! I can't sweep, because I'm not even doing it at home. I don't do the sweeping at home. How can I come and sweep the classroom?"* Educator 2 in School B also adds: *"There was the other one who refused to sweep and I said if you do not want to sweep please don't come in!, I'm sorry, you're going to wait outside at the window and attend through the window. I don't say you must not*

attend but attend from the window". These incidents demonstrate the frustrations educators are experiencing in their various schools. Such incidents demoralise educators, and may lead to ineffective teaching and learning if not appropriately addressed.

4.4 CAUSES OF INEFFECTIVE DISCIPLINE IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS

4.4.1 Unsystematic abolition of corporal punishment

In 1996 South Africa passed legislation that outlawed corporal punishment in all South African schools (Department of Education 2000:5). The South African Schools Act (SASA, 84 of 1996: s.10) states that: (1) "no person may administer corporal punishment at a school to a learner; (2) any person who contravenes subsection 1 is guilty of an offence and liable on conviction to a sentence which could be imposed for assault". Therefore, educators were expected to find alternative methods to manage and maintain discipline in schools. This led to the introduction of the manual "*Alternatives to Corporal Punishment*" in 2000 (Department of Education). The manual was intended to serve as a guideline for educators on alternative methods of discipline.

This research shows that the abolition of corporal punishment was haphazardly done. Educator 3 in School B argues: "*In as far as the issue of discipline is concerned in schools; eh... you know, the issue of corporal punishment even though sometimes somewhere it was harsh but it had been abolished before the government made a thorough research about what must be done to create that*". Educator 2 in School B also indicates that the abolition of corporal punishment without putting alternative ways in place is one of the contributing factors to disciplinary problems. Educator 3 in School B adds: "*After the government has put the law, abolishing corporal punishment, there's nothing they did to try to*

help the schools to come up with what they should do in order to punish learners. They left that issue in the hands of the schools to an extent that it is difficult. They are the ones who abolished corporal punishment they should have also been the ones who must come up with the mechanism to deal with that one, something that must replace that. And they fear to establish the common eh... system or method for punishment, because they do not want to be responsible”.

These respondents argue that at least common ways of managing discipline should be established; as Educator 4 in School B highlights: *“They always say use the alternatives means; don’t use corporal punishment. That’s the statement they use, they never came up and say do ABC”*. Thorough training on alternatives to corporal punishment will surely overcome all the misperceptions demonstrated by some of the respondents within this study. This study has revealed that the government was unjust to educators by outlawing corporal punishment without putting in place a systematic plan on how to control misconduct at schools.

4.4.2 Insufficient formal training

The Department of Education should have ensured that training was executed on alternatives to corporal punishment after its abolition. According to Le Roux (2005:7), the government should play a more proactive role in organising information sessions with educators and principals on alternative forms of discipline. This research has indicated that there was minimal training on this issue and in some cases there was none. This suggests that educators were not equipped with alternative methods to corporal punishment after its abolition. According to Le Roux (2005:7), one of the main contributing factors towards disciplinary problems in schools is that educators were not equipped with alternative methods to corporal punishment even after 1996 when corporal

punishment in schools was abolished. Star (2006:1) also maintains that not enough has been done to train educators in the alternative methods of discipline introduced by the Department of Education. Soneson (2005:19) affirms that a large number of educators have not been reached by the training on alternatives to corporal punishment and they are not equipped with skills to manage discipline in the classroom through non-violent means. Consequently schools are also experiencing increasing incidents of ill-discipline and uncertainty about which disciplinary measures to use to maintain discipline (Masitsa 2008:236) due to minimal and sporadic training on alternatives to corporal punishment (Le Roux 2005:7).

In this research almost all respondents did not receive training on alternatives to corporal punishment. Educator 3 in School A indicates: *"We were just told that we should do away with corporal punishment"*. Educator 4 in School A adds: *"We also heard about that from the media"*. Educator 5 in School A adds: *"We also became aware of these alternatives through our studies"*. Educators 1 and 2 in School B indicated that they learnt about discipline in the college but they did not suggest what one should do when the learner transgresses.

In School C only one educator received training for three days (Educator 5). Educator 4 in School C heard about these alternatives at the college. All educators in School D indicated that they were not trained on alternatives to corporal punishment. Educator 1 affirms: *"The information was given to us in a circular form"*. The issue of alternative methods to corporal punishment was not well communicated to educators; it was just imposed without thorough research and training.

4.4.3 Lack of parental involvement

Koenig (2008:2) indicates that lack of parental involvement and support in and for the schools is one of the main causes of misbehaviours in schools. This research has revealed that most parents do not support educators on the issue of discipline. Educator 5 in School A says: *“Most parents only come to school when they want to complain about something or when they have a problem with the teacher”*. Educator 1 in School A also adds: *“Yeah, still on the very same question, majority of parents do not show interest on their children’s education. Most of them do not attend meetings unless they are compelled to; by dealing with them individually. So, it becomes difficult for the school because when serious issues are discussed in the meetings you will find that most parents are not there. On top of that come January, that’s where now parents are going to come to complain to educators on their children’s results whereas there was no support by parents during the year”*. Educator 5 in School D shares the same sentiments: *“They only come at the beginning of the year when they realise that their children have failed and during the year they were not interested”*.

Principal 4 also commented on the lack of parental involvement in learner discipline: *“They only come when the learner has done something serious where the school is compelled to send the learner back home to collect the parent. That is why parents are usually coming but it doesn’t necessarily mean that parents are always available. They don’t play an upper role. And that is why when we talk about ill-discipline, it emanates from parents not pushing from their side. It is from that background where parents are not helping because learners come from their background”*. Educator 5 in School D affirms: *“Yes, only a few shows interest. Most of the parents are not interested in their children’s education and welfare. Maybe is because some of them work away from their*

homes and they only come at the end of the month. Some of the parents just stay away. Some don't even come when they are called. Some of them come but most of them don't show up". The research has revealed that parents who are available distance themselves from the education of their children, especially in secondary schools. Educator 1 in School C agrees: *"Most of the parents don't respond and what surprises me is that we've got a primary school nearby and when they are called they respond but when we call them some don't respond".* This shows that parents are reluctant to participate in the education of their children. The more parents distance themselves from their children's education, the more this will result in an escalation of misconduct in schools. Therefore, effective teaching and learning will be hampered.

4.4.4 Societal problems

This research has revealed that the problem of discipline is a societal problem. Principal 3 argues: *"You see discipline is not confined to a school, is a societal problem. You will find that most of these ill-behaved learners are coming from broken families; violent families or they are coming from child-headed families. So, they lack parental guidance. So, I think if we can address this societal problem that children are left alone to think for themselves, if we can address that in the society, I think this problem can be minimal if not eradicated. Because a child is a child and so, if a child is left to tend him/herself it will be difficult for that child to be taught on how to behave. In my opinion I think we need parental involvement, we need to help the society to ensure that every child has an elder to take care of. They must not be alone. There should always be guidance".*

Educator 5 in School D agrees: *"You also find that there are families which are headed by these learners. The parents work far from their homes or either dead. So, in that case families are headed by these learners".* Educator 5 in School A adds: *"Most*

learners come from families where there are no parents because at times when parents are called you will find that children are on their own, the parents are not there maybe because of work. So, this creates a problem". This suggests that there is lack of supervision at home. Educator 1 in School B also suggests: *"The environment is not conducive, the community is contributing, just imagine alcohol being sold to young children. These learners sometimes copy the behaviour from the adults".*

4.4.5 Evading responsibility

The parents have a tendency of shifting their role of instilling good morals into their children onto the educators and this causes problems to the educators as they need parental support in dealing with disciplinary problems (Ndamani 2008:177). Principal 1 comments: *"Honestly speaking they still want us to resolve these problems on our own but the assistance that they give us is when they are invited they are willing to come and they really listen to what you are saying, and we let them talk to their children in our presence".* Educator 3 in School C also agrees: *"They expect you to do everything even when they are called to school to discuss an issue on their children. They just listen to what you are saying".*

This shows that some of these parents are afraid of their children as Educator 1 in School A indicates: *"Parents are also afraid of their kids. Even if you can discipline a child here at school when the parent comes he/she will be in favour of the learner because she/he is afraid of him/her. For example there was an educator who took the cap from the learner. When the parent came, instead of helping the educator she told him how expensive the cap is".*

According to Joubert and Bray (2007:82), the ultimate responsibility for learners' behaviour rests with their parents or

legal guardians. They further indicate that parents should support the school and direct their children to abide by all school rules and regulations and also to accept responsibility for any misconduct on their part. Educators and parents should support each other in discipline management to allow effective teaching and learning. This is supported by Ndamani (2008:182), who stipulates that when the parents and educators work together, they can produce more effective changes in the learners' behaviour than when either party is grappling with the problem alone.

According to Educator 3 in School B the government also contributes on the issue of ill-discipline in schools: *“They just want to be there and point attitudinal fingers at educators who are at school and who are really experiencing this predicament. What they did is the theory. And the practical part of that is very difficult. My comment for this neh..., eh... up until the government becomes serious about the education of our learners (x2 to stress the point) we are going nowhere. Eh... the manner in which the government is handling education in the country doesn’t show any seriousness. We must be honest with that because eh... you know; we can only succeed as a country if we invest more in education. Investing more in education must go hand in hand with discipline. We can invest money but if there is no discipline then nothing will happen. And then secondly, the situation in the majority of our schools in the country, the situation in general is not conducive for education to take place, that’s the bottom line, is not conducive at all for education to take place, the situation in general. And it is the responsibility of government to see to it that it is conducive”.*

Educator 3 in School B further argues: *“The underlying function of the government in whatever country is to legislate legislation and legislations must be legislated informed by what is happening out*

there. We do have a problem of ill-discipline but government doesn't come up with the legislation to control that, you see? Legislation always comes to the fore after we have experienced the problem in the community in order to try to control that. But why this is long since we've been talking about it but nothing is done up to now? And obviously, somehow somewhere the government is not really exercising its power. They exercise power where they want to serve their own interest but not the interest of the community at large. And with the issue of education I'm telling you, they are dragging the country down the drain and we are the ones to suffer".

4.4.6 Underperforming learners

The research demonstrates that most learners with disciplinary problems are underperforming. Educator 5 in School A believes that they perform badly due to social problems. Educator 2 in School A adds: *"Some underperform because they are not co-operative".* Educator 1 in School B argues: *"They are disruptive and do not concentrate in class".* Educator 4 in School C indicates that most of these learners *"repeat the questions instead of answering them".* Educator 5 in School D concurs: *"Most of the learners are not well prepared for secondary education; you will find that some of them won't even write nor read so they become bored. The level of their IQ (Intelligence Quotient) is that of primary school. You will also find that these learners are pushed to the next grade even if they don't cope because the policy says they must go with their age cohort".*

This research suggests that most of the ill-disciplined learners are those who underperform academically. Educator 4 in School B indicates: *"They perform poorly! Most of them are poor!"* Educator 4 in School D agrees: *"They really perform below par. They don't perform as expected".* Educator 5 in School D adds: *"They*

perform dismally and don't care. They don't see the need to be educated". It is evident that this type of learner does not even see the importance of education and this might be due to *"lack of future orientation"* as Educator 1 in School A highlights. Educator 5 in School B indicates: *"They play a lot"*. Due to the fact that they become bored they also *"disrupt others"* as Educator 1 in School C indicates. This research revealed that underperforming learners are disruptive and deliberately disturb other learners in class, so this may hamper effective teaching and learning.

4.4.7 Outweighing of rights

Maphosa and Shumba (2010:397) state that the thrust on children's rights and subsequent banning of corporal punishment has ushered in an era of licentiousness in learners as they no longer have respect for their educators. Educator 5 in School A indicates: *"Learners still don't understand what rights are. Each time when you try to help them they think that not doing their school work is their right, ignoring the fact that rights go together with responsibilities"*. Educator 2 in School B states: *"They always talk about rights. The rights are outweighing. Whether disciplined or indiscipline, they've got right to education"*.

Educator 1 in School B argues that *"there is a Code of conduct for learners and every learner and parent sign that they've read. It is just a theory and the implementation of it is something else because the rights are coming in"*. Educator 4 in School B also adds: *"there is a lot of exaggeration in the name of democracy"*. This research has revealed that there is an overemphasis of rights, as supported by Joubert and Bray (2007:81), who state that an overemphasis of human rights is detectable in schools, at home and in the community. They further highlight that learners are very much aware of their rights, but they show little responsibility to meet their obligations. The researchers further indicate that the only way to maintain balance is clear instruction

regarding rights and obligations, a process in which a well-formulated code of conduct can play a major role.

4.5 DISCIPLINARY MEASURES

4.5.1 Methods employed as disciplinary measures

Although various alternative disciplinary measures to corporal punishment were introduced, some educators feel that they are not effective (Maphosa & Shumba 2010:397). This is supported by Olley, Cohn and Cowan (2010:7), who argue that extensive use of suspension and expulsion does not correct misbehaviour over time and actually contributes to increased misbehaviour, lack of academic achievement, poorer school climate, an elevated dropout rate, and increased juvenile delinquency and incarceration. Le Roux (2005:7) also concurs that methods such as detention, keeping children in during breaks to complete work, suspension, as well as calling parents in to discuss discipline have failed dismally. Nevertheless, this research has exposed that although some disciplinary measures are not effective, some are declared to be working effectively.

The respondents identified some of the alternative methods which they employ to manage discipline in their various schools. The following were identified as successful methods to address discipline problems in schools:

Inviting parents to school; giving learners lighter work, for example sweeping or picking up papers; detention; extra work; verbal warning; a written reprimand; mentorship; sworn statement; involving the disciplinary committee; exclusion from other activities; confessing in front of other learners at assembly; suspension; and inviting stakeholders to give motivational talks.

4.5.2 Effective methods of discipline

- **Inviting parents to school:** Principal 1 responds: *“What we normally do when the child is ill-disciplined in the school is we normally invite a parent. We issue out a letter to the parent. We meet with the parent together with the child”*. The respondent elaborates: *“This one of calling parents is effective because you see learners don’t want their parents to come to school. If he/she comes once, the learner will not want him/her to come again”*. Educator 4 in School B adds: *“Knowing the parents is the one which works a lot and holding conference with them”*. This research revealed that involvement of parents in the education of their children may reduce misbehaviour in schools.
- **Mentorship:** Principal 1 states: *“In order of preference this one of mentorship also works effectively”*. The respondent elaborates further: *“In most cases I request class educators and grade mentors to identify problematic learners then we arrange mentoring for them and monitor them. I also monitor the process and check if the number reduces or increases, if they were twenty, I continuously check if they are still twenty or not. But in most cases the number decreases because of the involvement of all educators”*. Mentoring seems to be another successful method of reducing misbehaviour at schools.
- **Suspension:** Educator 5 in School D responds: *“We call parents and interview them together with the learners. If there is a need for suspension we suspend the learner for 3 days and after that if the learner doesn’t change we refer the matter to the HOD. If the offence is major we refer the matter to the HOD. Sometimes suspension do work effectively because most learners come back rehabilitated”*. The Department of Education (2000:27) clearly states that after a fair disciplinary

hearing the school governing body may suspend a learner from attending school either as a punishment for no longer than one week or pending a decision made by the Head of Department as to whether the learner should be expelled from school or not. This discipline method seems to be working more or less effectively for this school but not for other schools, as Principal 4 argues: *“Methods like suspension and detention don’t work for us”*.

- **Public confession:** Educator 3 in School B states: *“Apologising in front of everyone. I remember that boy who came with liquor at school and was supposed to stand in front of everyone at the assembly and apologise for having brought liquor at the school premises. The learners asked him why he brought the liquor in the first place. He was supposed to explain to everyone. And they wanted him to explain before they could even forgive him. To an extent that if really a child is normal he could never do it again. That one is very much effective”*. Principal 2 also confirms this: *“In most cases learners are made to confess publicly in the assembly on what he/she did and why that was done. He/she has to assure everyone that it will never happen again. Then the learner will in front of other learners be requested to choose the relevant punishment for his/her misconduct. This assists the learner together with other learners not to do the same mistake. So, the learners are afraid to commit the misconduct because they know that they will have to confess in front of the whole school”*. Irrespective of whether this method works effectively for the school or not, the school should consider the human dignity of the learner. In whatever method applied by the schools to correct misconducts, the schools should ensure that the learners’ rights are not infringed. This is supported by Roos (2003:486), who indicates that the disciplinary system is

based on human dignity and on respect and consideration of others and not on fear or assault.

The above-mentioned methods of discipline were identified by schools as the most effective methods that can be used to correct misconducts. Although these methods were identified, they are not working for all schools, especially suspension, which is not working for some of the schools. Having noted the methods that work to assist in the disciplining of learners, it was also imperative to investigate methods that are not working in schools. These were identified as follows:

4.5.3 Ineffective methods of discipline

The respondents complained of the ineffectiveness of most disciplinary measures because the same behaviour recurs and even gets worse. Educator 4 in School B indicates: *“Some of these methods that we are mentioning around are not effective they are somehow because the same behaviour continuous”*.

- **Manual tasks:** Principal 1 reports: *“When the offence is not serious we give him/her light work to do or at times we detain the learner. These methods of detention, doing lighter work like picking up papers are ineffective; they seem to be enjoying being outside”*. Educator 5 in School D confirms this: *“The manual one doesn’t work because they like being outside to an extent that they sometimes even get used to the fact that we can offend and they will never do anything to us. We are going to clean outside”*. This perception clearly indicates that this method does not address what it is intended to do. So, this suggests that this method has failed dismally.

- **Detention:** Educator 5 in School C maintains: *“Disciplining learners by making them remain after school is a problem; it doesn’t really work more especially because we are in a rural area whereby learners themselves happen to be parents in their homes. As such keeping them here after school is a problem because the learner should make sure that there is something to eat for the young ones”*. Educator 1 in School C adds: *“On the part of the learners being detained after school, there are learners who are using transport. When the school knocks-off the transport come and collect them. So, it is difficult to manage detention properly”*.

Some of the respondents assert that the following methods are also regarded as ineffective: sworn statement, written reprimand; exclusion from other activities and suspension. Principal 4 argues: *“Methods like suspension and detention don’t work for us”*.

This research showed that some methods of discipline are less effective than others. From my point of view and what I have gathered from this research some methods might work effectively for a particular school but their effectiveness may be diminished in other schools. For instance, I have a son who was detained once in his lifetime. Like some of the learners mentioned above, he was using transport as mentioned above. I discussed the matter with the boy and told him I would never come to collect him and that he should be responsible for his unbecoming behaviour. Since then, he has always been elected a class prefect and presently he has been elected a head-boy. So, based on this experience, I recommend that all these methods be used in collaboration with parental involvement. This is emphasised by Principal 1 who declares: *“This one of calling parents is effective because you see learners don’t want their parents to come to school. If he/she comes once, the learner will not want him/her to*

come again". Therefore, each parent should be informed of every misconduct the learner commits, whether minor or major.

4.6 REDUCING DISCIPLINARY PROBLEMS AT SECONDARY SCHOOLS

This research has succeeded in identifying factors that can assist to enhance discipline in schools.

4.6.1 Code of Conduct

Roos (2003:510) maintains that it is the duty of each governing body to adopt a code of conduct that will be the legal instrument regulating the maintenance of discipline in the school. Therefore, it is important for schools to have rules to regulate the behaviour of the learners (Ndamani 2008:183). The researcher further indicates that having set rules in schools is one way of solving the discipline problems that are experienced.

Section 8 of the South African Schools Act (84 of 1996) highlights that a governing body of a public school must adopt a Code of Conduct. The respondents indicated the key role-players who were involved in the drafting of the Code of Conduct for learners, e.g. the SGB (School Governing Body), SMT (School Management Team), RCL (Representative Council of Learners), educators and parents. The Code of Conduct is then ratified and adopted by the SGB. Principal 1 indicates: *"Eh what we normally do is when it is drafted all educators know about it, learners and then parents' meeting is called and where possible it is rectified here and there"*.

Principal 2 also reports: *"Parents are involved in the discussion of the code of conduct and give inputs. Then parents get to know what is needed or not. Involving parents assists a lot, for example they assisted us to do away with the cell phones at school and for*

those who do not adhere to this rule the cell phone is kept in the office until the end of the year. This rule is stated in the Code of Conduct. The parents are also informed on the minor misconducts so that they can also enforce discipline to their children at home. This assists in maintaining discipline in school because the child will know that the school is always updating his/her parents on his/her behaviour at school. This also assists to minimise problematic learners at school". Principal 3 adds: *"The parents, usually in conjunction with this guideline, they provide their own views on how their children should be disciplined at school and that in itself helps in challenging implement this guideline to come up with effective disciplinary measures. So, their inputs usually in conjunction with these disciplinary measures play an important role because at times parents bring in their views on how we should discipline their children to avoid inconsistency within the school".*

Educator 1 in School B states: *"There is a Code of Conduct for learners and every learner and parent sign that they've read and understood it".* This might assist to manage discipline because each and every parent becomes acquainted with the school rules and regulations. The signatures symbolise that the parents together with the learner acknowledge that they have understood what is entailed in the Code of Conduct. Educator 1 in School D confirms this: *"We have discipline policy and we make that available to everyone including parents and we make them sign".* Principal 3 adds: *"By making sure that this Code of Conduct is accessible and visible to all learners so that it can address to them, and they can see it wherever they go in most parts of the area like the assembly and notice board. We do this so that they can acquaint themselves with it."*

During the course of the year learners are continuously reminded of the rules and regulations at assembly and even in their classrooms. Educator 5 in School A states: *"We inform them*

continuously about school rules". Principal 3 also highlights how classroom rules play a vital role within the school. He reports as follows: *"We always make use of the class educators to discuss ground rules with the learners at the beginning of the year and always remind them of the Code of Conduct during the assembly maybe once a week. We think talking to these learners about the Code of Conduct always helps them to remember what is wrong".*

The aim of the Code of Conduct in schools is to reduce ill discipline and encourage positive behaviour amongst the learners. The school's Code of Conduct should be in accordance with the Provincial or National Code of Conduct as indicated in the guidelines of the Department of Education (2000:20). Although codes of conduct drawn up by individual schools must not contradict the Provincial or National Code of Conduct, which embraces the values enshrined in the Constitution and South African Schools Act, they should meet the unique needs of the school. So, the SGB should, in consultation with parents, learners and educators, adopt the Code of Conduct of the school.

Moreover, a code of conduct promotes proper and good behaviour and sets standards for positive discipline. A school's code of conduct functions similarly to the law in broader society: the law consists of a body of norms, values and rules which society has accepted as its law; people (i.e. persons as bearers of rights and obligations) must obey the law and when the law is disobeyed, legal measures must be enforced to restore legal equilibrium. The code of conduct likewise operates to promote, maintain and enforce learner discipline in the school, and restore order and equilibrium in the learner community, as Bray (2005:134) contends. So it follows that it is proper that learners be continually reminded of their school's Code of Conduct as from the research. This will hopefully lead to a reduction of misconduct

within the school because each learner will know exactly what is expected of him/her.

4.6.2 Promoting positive behaviour

This research revealed that the following successful strategies can be utilised to promote positive behaviour within the school:

(a) Awards

Leaman (2005:38) indicates that learners who have made an effort to contain their own behaviour should be praised and even included in class awards or certificates. Principal 1 mentioned that they prepare certificates and award learners who are doing well in various activities. Principal 2 explains further: *“If you can look behind, there are tokens which are displayed. All this tokens are trophies which were awarded to learners. Recently we had a prize giving ceremony where we awarded them trophies and certificates. We award them according to different activities, that is, the committees, academic-subjects, (spirit) best outgoing learner, sports, cultural, service award (service to school community), English Literature award, Grade 12 top academic achievement, special awards (especially for various competitions at Provincial and National level). This assist the school to minimise disciplinary problems because learners work hard and they are always engaged throughout the year in order to qualify for awards at the end of the year”*.

Educator 1 in School D indicates the following: *“Usually we used to hold the diploma day where we give them merit awards and we recognise their performances in class. At the end of each term those who performed well are announced at the assembly. We motivate them in assemblies or praise them, although we are struggling but we are trying. They are also awarded for good behaviour, e.g. punctual learner, a well-behaved learner, etc”*.

It is absolutely advantageous to motivate and encourage learners for positive behaviour and work well done. Learners will have a sense of belonging and be more determined to improve. Consequently, disciplinary problems will be reduced; and effective teaching and learning will prevail.

(b) *Shared rule making*

Kupchik (2010:195) asserts that learners are a great resource for identifying the school's biggest behaviour problems, and they might also be able to distinguish between concerns over actual problems the school faces as opposed to unrealistic fears. All the schools indicated that learners are involved in the drafting of the Code of Conduct. These learners are also involved in developing classroom rules. Harper et al. (2005:3) asserts that involving children in making the school rules is shown to significantly reduce disciplinary problems. They further maintain that rules are far more effective if educators and learners work together to agree on them.

(c) *Motivation*

Le Roux (2005:7) maintains that educators should praise children for work done well or reward them for outstanding academic and sporting achievements, which is a way to motivate children and encourage them. Principal 3 states: *"Sometimes we award certificates for most behaved learners to motivate other learners. We think through recognition it will promote self-discipline and self-control, in a way this learners will be wishing to obtain that meanwhile we are achieving what we strive for. So, positive behaviour can be promoted through recognition of positive behaviour"*.

Educator 1 in School B states: *"We announce the awards at assembly, praising them in front of others for work well done"*. So, learners become more determined if they are encouraged and

motivated for work well done. Educator 1 in School C mentions that learners also become more motivated if their excellent work is read at the assembly. Other learners also strive to achieve that. Educator 4 in School B also highlights: *“When they performed very well every year they are given awards. And those learners who improve in discipline are awarded certificates of improvement in the behaviour. So, learners feel very good that we are recognising their change of attitude”*. Principal D adds: *“Through appreciation, encouraging them, and giving results at assembly by announcing top ten learners and praising them. This is done every term and it motivates other learners to work hard”*.

(d) Modelling good behaviour

Soneson (2005: 26) maintains that “Good” discipline – which must ultimately be self-discipline – depends on adults modelling and explaining positive behaviour. Principal D responds: *“We encourage educators to be punctual in whatever they are doing and to make sure that they do their work because one problem is causing the other one. So, immediately you can make sure that the staff is punctual, automatically it reduces the problems”*. Educator 1 in School A indicates that educators in their school model good behaviour so that learners can copy from them.

(e) Various sporting activities

This research has revealed that involving learners in various activities really arouses their interest. Principal 2 indicates the following: *“We involve them in different activities and different sporting codes to keep them busy”*. Educator 1 in School D also agrees that schools should be well equipped with sports facilities so that various sports activities can be introduced. This can assist in minimising disciplinary problems in schools. Perhaps educators could develop alternative skills of learners who are academically underperforming.

(f) Religious organisation

This research has also revealed that religious organisations can assist to mould learners' behaviour. Educator 4 in School B states: *"We encourage them to belong to religious organisations like chapel committee. And every day we pray you know. We go to the chapel for prayer and it helps quite a number of them to think twice because every day we are reading the bible. So the religious ethos that we have helps most of them"*. Principal 1 also indicates that learners need to be supported in all activities they are involved in and among others he also mentions the SCO (Student Christian Organisation).

4.6.3 Self control and self discipline

According to Bear, Cavalier and Manning (2005:5) self discipline connotes internal regulation of one's behaviour. It entails assuming responsibility for one's actions, understanding right from wrong, appreciating the importance of co-operative relationships, and inhibiting socially inappropriate behaviour. It involves knowing what is right, desiring to do what is right, and doing what is right.

Principal 1 pointed out how learners are involved in leadership positions in order to encourage them to develop self control and discipline. He states that learners are involved in the RCL and says: *"We usually tell them that they are leaders and encourage them to be good leaders. Doing things on their own; will make them to be able to take own initiatives. Or if perhaps we want to pass information to the learners we don't let educators do it instead we send RCL"*.

Principal 2 also indicates how learners are involved: *"In this school we have many committees so; learners are involved in these various committees, e.g. sports (each sporting code has*

committee of its own), library, food etc. So, we are encouraging all learners to at least serve in one of the committees. Learners start to learn responsibility, discipline and leadership by getting involved in those committees. They are there as leaders supervising their fellow students. They lead, supervise and guide learners under their supervision and this encourages others to develop self-control and self-discipline. This helps us to effectively manage discipline within the school". Educator 1 in School B and Principal 4 confirm that learners belong to different committees like the Food Committee where they organise the distribution of food.

Principal 3 also states: *"Well we use the RCL to help in discipline, sometimes we involve them in disciplinary hearings and we use them to monitor that their fellow learners adhere to the policy when they are in the school yard. These RCL is drawn from all the classes, so every class is represented. This means that each class will be reminded of the classroom rules and the code of conduct by their class representatives. If something goes wrong in class, the class representatives inform the class educator".*

The Department of Education Western Cape (2007:6) outlines the duties and responsibilities of the RCL and class prefects as follows:

Duties and responsibilities of the Representative Council of Learners (RCL)

- *Develop and promote a positive learner spirit and culture within the school.*
- *Encourage fellow learners to participate and are responsible for the sound functioning of the school.*
- *Promote good discipline by holding regular learner meetings and discussions.*

- *Use communication channels to discuss learner frustrations and fears.*
- *Promote positive communication with educators and school management.*
- *Create clubs and special projects to promote learner involvement.*
- *Take part in school governing body activities.*
- *Act as ambassadors in the school and community.*

Duties and responsibilities of the Prefect Programme/Class Monitor System

- *Promote good discipline in class and on the school premises.*
- *Ensure a clean and tidy classroom.*
- *Promote classroom pride.*
- *Monitor class attendance.*
- *Liaise with class educators about learner issues and learner grievances.*

The duties mentioned above can be carried out effectively in some schools but given the challenges schools are currently faced with, in some schools this will not work at all. As long as some learners are at liberty to carry dangerous objects to schools, RCLs and class prefects will be fearful to execute their duties as expected.

4.6.4 Educator–learner relationships

The key to maintaining good discipline is to establish a good relationship with learners based on mutual respect and rapport (Rogers 2002:41). Therefore, a positive relationship between educators and learners is imperative for effective teaching and learning. Moreover, positive educator-learner relationships have the potential of creating conducive learning environment in the classroom (Mokhele 2006:149).

Educator-learner relationships should be characterized by caring; and a positive school climate should manifest listening, critical questioning, openness and a feeling of being cared for (Mtsweni 2008:35). Principal 4 displays how good educator-learner relationship assists to unearth learners' problems: *"Sometimes you will think the learner is ill-disciplined but only to find that the learner has social problems"*. He further indicates that there was a learner who had to face several challenges, for instance poverty, and a lack of parental care due to his parents' negligence. By a mere discussion between the educator and the learner, this was resolved. This suggests that if an educator shows that he/she cares and is prepared to listen; learners open up with their problems. This most importantly also assists learners to offload their burdens and concentrate on their school work.

A positive educator-child relationship would consist of ingredients such as: mutual trust, a sense of loyalty, a sense of caring and interest; mutual respect and respect for the rights of the other; and valuing the person as a person independent of what he or she does for you (Jackson 1991:29). The research also revealed that learners become more willing to assist in managing discipline if educators show that they trust them. Principal 1 says: *"If perhaps we want to pass information to the learners we don't send educators we send RCL and this helps learners to take their own initiatives"*. To demonstrate respect, Educator 3 in School C indicates that if educators encounter a problem with a particular learner, *"they talk to him/her individually"*. Good educator-learner relationships will therefore promote effective teaching and learning.

4.6.5 School–home relationships

Ndamani (2008: 188) indicates that a communication breakdown between the school and the home is one of the factors which contribute to a lack of discipline in secondary schools. So, schools should ensure good relationships between the educators and parents. In this way educators and parents can help the child by their cooperation and mutual understanding (Dreikurs, Cassel, & Ferguson: 2004:57). Schools maintain good relationships with the parents by always involving and informing them about school activities. Principal 2 puts it as follows: *“We usually phone them but most of the time during parents meeting we give RCL and educators slots to inform parents about what is happening at the school. Then we discuss together with the parents and come up with the solutions which will work best for the school. By discussing together as stakeholders assists in minimising misunderstandings that might be there because all stakeholders within the school know what is happening at the school. The involvement of all stakeholders assists a lot.”*

Principal 3 indicates the importance of maintaining good relationships with parents: *“Yes definitely because you see, parents play very important role in the development of their children. So, their availability is very critical. We can’t do it on our own as educators at the school. We are with the child for the other part of the day and the other part of the day the child is with the parents so their input is very important”*. Principal 1 also highlights that if the school is in a good relationship with parents they can both assist in monitoring the learner continuously. Principal 2 states: *“The relationship that we have with our parents assists us to resolve the problem immediately before it becomes worse”*.

Good relationship between educators and parents induces voluntary support and participation by parents. Educator 4 in

School B states: *“Most parents are supportive when coming to learner discipline”*. Educator 1 in School B also adds: *“Some parents show support by visiting the school uninvited to discuss their child’s progress or his/her problem in a particular subject”*. It is evident that in some schools most parents have come to understand the importance of parental involvement. So, parents have begun to take responsibility for their children’s conduct, as parenting is not the primary purpose of educators (Le Roux 2005:7). Educator 1 in School C also supports the perception that only in some schools parents are actively involved in their children’s education: *“Most of the parents don’t respond and what surprises me is that we’ve got a primary school nearby and when they are called they respond but when we call them some don’t respond”*.

4.6.6 Good communication amongst all stakeholders

Communication is vital where people work together as a unity. It assists a group to work as a unit and to strive for a common goal. Good communication is crucial amongst all stakeholders for the smooth running of the school. This research revealed how good communication assists in managing discipline within the school.

Principal 3 states: *“Communication is very, very crucial because through communication all misunderstandings are being cleared and everybody has a common vision or understanding of how the school operates and that understanding came through communication”*. He continues: *“We all work together as a unit; we believe in teamwork”*. Educator 3 in School B concurs: *“A team work in any institution or company has to bring about a good production. If eh... maybe the managers might be open and take the responsibility and make sure that even the learners know that each and every teacher on the school premises is responsible to maintain discipline; that will also help”*. Principal 1 also highlights *“It is important in the sense that if you do not communicate with*

the parents you will find yourself nowhere. You have to communicate with them so that when you invite them they should not query and complain that you don't involve them".

Principal 2 also emphasises the importance of communication: *"Communication plays a vital role for example if you communicate with a learner about what he/she did, the learner will end up understanding that what he/she did was wrong so, this assist in minimising the problems at school. By communicating rules and regulations of the school at assembly timeously keeps on reminding learners of what is wrong and what is not. So, we sometimes read the Code of Conduct at the assembly to remind them about school rules and regulations. By mere communicating with each other, minimise the problems that we might have as a school because when we communicate with learners we knock sense into them and they will start to understand the school policies and why is it important to adhere to the policies".*

Principal 4 adds: *"It is very important to communicate because sometimes you will think that the learner is too ill-disciplined but only to find that the learner has a social problem. For example last year in grade 12 we had a learner who was adamant and wasn't doing his home works. I communicated with the learner and realised that they are selling liquor at home and they are not sleeping because of the set up at home. I advised the learner to remain at school to do home works and study. In other situation we found that the learner is staying alone and the mother is staying with her boyfriend. The learner had to face different challenges e.g. poverty, lack of parental care etc. So, this made the learner to be aggressive with everyone. So, communication unearths those problems. Most problems are social problems unless you communicate them you will not understand why those learners are behaving like that".*

Through this research it has become apparent that good communication enhances good relationships amongst stakeholders. So, good communication will lead to effective learning and teaching, where educators and learners will be motivated to work cooperatively together. Therefore, it is imperative that all schools should consider sustaining good communication within the school environment. And this is feasible if the dictum is embraced by everyone within the school. Moreover, it is evident that open and sincere communication assists in discipline management.

4.6.7 Proper security

Discipline at school has two very important goals, namely to create an environment conducive to learning and teaching; and to ensure the safety of staff and learners (Joubert, De Waal & Rossouw 2005:208). So, it is of the outmost importance to ensure that all schools are well secured for the safety of both the staff and learners. All schools should create a safe environment, conducive to effective teaching and learning. Olley, Cohn and Cowan (2010:8) also affirm that learners are better able to learn when they feel safe.

Principal 1 asserts: *“According to me, all these schools should have proper security. All schools should be properly fenced. There should be proper control at the gate. There should be someone at the gate to monitor the entrance of everyone entering the school premises. Learners should also be searched when entering the gate”*. Educator 4 in School B highlighted the incident of an educator who was killed because the learner entered the school premises in possession of a gun: *“Do you remember the incident in Kwa Zulu Natal whereby a lady teacher was teaching Mathematics and gave learners homework and then one of the*

learners took out a gun and shot the teacher? The teacher was lying there dead. It was on news. And this is bringing more indiscipline because educators are afraid to control the learners. So, educators would rather teach and go home". Educator 3 in School B adds: "And help learner who wants to get help. And then that's the problem and where is the government? In Limpopo recently an educator has been chopped into pieces by his brother who got into the school because our schools aren't really protected. People are just coming in, coming out, going out and so forth. That is why we say; and when we talk to the government they will say there is no enough money for hiring proper security". Considering these two incidents it becomes more apparent that educators, learners and other staff are not safe in our schools.

Prinsloo (2005:5) clearly explains a legal framework for safe schools:

A safe school may be defined as one that is free of danger and where there is an absence of possible harm; a place in which non-educators, educators and learners may work, teach and learn without fear of ridicule, intimidation, harassment, humiliation, or violence. A safe school is therefore a healthy school in that it is physically and psychologically safe. Indicators of safe schools include the presence of certain physical features such as secure walls, fencing and gates; buildings that are in a good state of repair; and well-maintained school grounds. Safe schools are further characterised by good discipline, a culture conducive to teaching and learning, professional educator conduct, good governance and management practices, and an absence (or low level) of crime and violence (Squelch, 2001:137-149).

Based on what this research has revealed, the government is not doing enough. Even though the government allows schools to conduct random searches when there is a need, this is not enough. The limitations anticipated in the Education Laws Amendment Act, no. 31 of 2007, hinder the curbing of school safety and security problems within the schools. So, it is imperative for the government to hire security staff for all schools to ensure proper control and monitoring of everyone entering and leaving the school premises. The Education Laws Amendment Act, no. 31 of 2007, states:

Subsection (2) Subject to subsection (3), the principal or his or her delegate may, at random, search any group of learners, or the property of a group of learners, for any dangerous object or illegal drug, if a fair and reasonable suspicion has been established:

- (a) that a dangerous object or an illegal drug may be found on school premises or during a school activity; or*
- (b) that one or more learners on school premises or during a school activity are in possession of dangerous objects or illegal drugs.*

Subsection (3) (a) A search contemplated in subsection (2) may only be conducted after taking into account all relevant factors, including:

- (i) the best interest of the learners in question or of any other learner at the school;*
- (ii) the safety and health of the learners in question or of any other learner at the school;*
- (iii) reasonable evidence of illegal activity; and*
- (iv) all relevant evidence received.*

(b) When conducting a search contemplated in subsection (2), the principal or his or her delegate must do so in a manner that is reasonable and proportional to the suspected illegal activity.

This Act entails that if there is no reasonable suspicion established that there might be someone carrying a dangerous weapon or illegal drugs within the school premises, there should be no search. And this puts the lives of everyone in danger; hence educators and learners die within the school premises due to the absence of proper security.

4.6.8 Incorporation of sports into the curriculum

Educator 1 in School D is of the opinion that sports should be incorporated in the curriculum so that learners who are gifted in sports are enabled to take that path as their career from an early age rather than to force them to follow the academic path. It goes without saying that even the technical stream should be introduced at earlier stages of learners' development in order to identify and develop their skills at an earlier stage. This will assist to reduce the number of learners who become bored during the teaching and learning process because they will also be focusing on what they are confident in.

Educator 1 in School D elaborates: *"I think step number one actually is for the department to make the curriculum of the secondary school to include sports as part and parcel of the curriculum just like in the former model C schools. And we must have facilities, sports facilities for these children. They should not have time when they are not engaged. If they are in classes, to open up their minds and make them aware that they do have skills and they can use them effectively from a very young age so that they should not just be confined to classroom and out of the*

classroom we only have soccer and netball. Where else in the former model C schools they have swimming, tennis, rugby, cricket and they have everything; and we don't have facilities for that. And so, it turns to be a problem rather to involve the learners to train them and to educate them in totality; and unfold the skills that they have. I think that should be the first step. If the department doesn't do that, then we will go back to having a problem of disciplining learners. But if we've got that and engage them fully I think that there will be strict reduction of discipline".

According to data collected "sports" should be a practical subject which carries the same value as other subjects. Although sport forms part of the curriculum as incorporated in Life Orientation, not enough is done. This view is supported by Rooth (2005:109), who states that physical education is being marginalised in schools, particularly in higher grades. This is due to lack of qualified physical education teachers, limited funds, insufficient time allocated to physical education and rationalisation of educators. Rooth (2005:110) also indicates that at some schools physical education was abandoned for academic pursuits in the fourth term in preparation for upcoming examinations. Sport is an extramural activity (Department of Education, 2003b) which should be promoted and offered at the school (Rooth 2005:295). The researcher also indicates that the task of Life Orientation is to motivate learners to participate in sport and kindle their interest in sport, as well as to equip them with the information to know the importance of a balanced lifestyle, which would include sport.

It is therefore imperative that enough time be allocated for sport activities; qualified physical education educators be employed; enough funds be allocated; schools be well equipped with sports equipment, various sporting activities be introduced and Life Orientation be treated like any other important subject. Eventually, learners will be motivated to make informed decisions

on their career path. And most importantly, this will assist schools in discipline management because the majority of learners will be engaged in a variety of activities.

4.7 ROLES OF VARIOUS STRUCTURES IN MANAGING DISCIPLINE WITHIN THE SCHOOL

4.7.1 Educators' roles on learner discipline

The respondents mentioned various educator roles and some have been highlighted in Chapter 2. Among others, educators' roles on learner discipline include:

- ***Developing a Code of Conduct, classroom rules and ensuring that they are implemented effectively.*** It is evident that in all schools educators play a vital role in developing school policies and establishing classroom rules. Principals 1, 2, 3 and 4 made mention of the fact that educators take part in developing a Code of Conduct and other respondents indicated that they also establish classroom rules together with the learners (Educator 1 & 6 in School A; Educator 3 in School C). Thereafter, it is the duty of each and every educator to ensure that what was initiated is effectively implemented.
- ***Modelling good behaviour.*** Principal 4 states: “we encourage educators to be punctual in whatever they are doing and to make sure that they do their work because one problem is causing the other one”. Educator 1 in School A mentions that “educators model good behaviour”. This will indirectly persuade learners to be well-behaved. Principal 4 further adds: “I think the most critical issue is to maintain discipline amongst the staff, because ill-discipline within the staff creates a loophole. For instance, if you are not punctual as an educator,

it will be difficult for you to tell the learner to be punctual, because she/he will not take you seriously. So, as an educator you must model the behaviour”.

- ***Monitoring and supervising the learners in all activities.***

Educator 1 in School D mentions that learners are monitored in classes, in the morning and during breaks. Educator 1 and 5 in School A add that educators even assist by conducting morning and afternoon studies; and controlling late-coming. Determined educators go to the extent of adopting learners and liaising with parents on the particular learner in order to monitor his/her progress and behaviour. Educator 1 in School D says: *“We adopt learners (Started with the grade 12), monitoring them continuously. Each educator adopts 3 learners. We have the contacts of the parents for monitoring of the learner and we communicate with the parents of those learners. The parents should also monitor them and thereafter we reconcile with the parents. And in that case we reduce the number of misconducts in the school because the learners are monitored continuously”.*

- ***Mentoring learners.*** Educator 4 in School B states: *“The grade educators talk to their learners on discipline before they even commit an offence”.* Principal 1 declares that the school identifies problematic learners with the assistance of class educators and *“we arrange mentoring for them and monitor them”.* He also assures that the number of problematic learners decreases through mentorship.

- ***Maintain discipline within the school.*** Educator 3 in School A mentions that *“educators deal with general discipline within the school”.*

- **Continuously remind learners about school rules.** Principal 2 indicates: *“we sometimes read the Code of Conduct at the assembly to remind them about school rules and regulations”*. He elaborates further: *“We always make use of the class educators to discuss ground rules with the learners at the beginning of the year and always remind them of the Code of Conduct during the assembly maybe once a week. We think talking to these learners about the Code of Conduct always helps them to remember what is wrong”*.
- **Motivating learners.** Educators have a duty of motivating learners in various ways. This research has displayed that learners are motivated through awards, public praise, and motivational talks and by involving them in school activities.
- **Discuss learner’s behaviour with parents.** Principal 2 says: *“we invite the parent to school to discuss the behaviour of the learner in his/her presence (learner)”*. Educator 4 in School B also indicates that a parents’ conference is arranged with the parents concerned to discuss the behaviours of their children with educators.

4.7.2 Principals’ roles on learner discipline

The role of the principal is to lead and manage the planning, delivery, evaluation and improvement of the education of all students in a community through the strategic deployment of resources provided by the Department and the school community. Therefore, the principal is accountable for the overall leadership, management and development of the school within state-wide guidelines and Government policies (Department of Education and Early Childhood Development 2009:2). Stipulated below, are the roles of the school manager (principal) on learner discipline as anticipated by Department of Education Western Cape (2007:4):

- *Primarily responsible for establishing the concept of positive behaviour within the school set-up.*
- *Ensures that all personnel, parents and learners are aware of the policies regarding positive learner behaviour.*
- *Ensures that policy regarding disciplinary measures is implemented.*
- *Ensures that learner behaviour and learner issues are discussed regularly.*
- *Ensures that record is kept of learner behaviour.*
- *Organises staff development sessions regarding the management of learners' behaviour.*
- *Organises interviews with parents about the progress and behaviour of learners.*
- *Ensures that the school has a good orientation programme for new learners (especially Grade 8).*
- *Ensures that learners are dealt with fairly and consistently.*

Significantly, in addition to the roles mentioned above, this research has revealed the following roles of the principals:

- The principal manages the whole school, ranging from curriculum management, managing discipline and maintaining order. So the principal ensures effective management of discipline and the curriculum (Principal 3).
- The role of the principal is to ensure the availability of discipline policy and monitoring that the policy is implemented accordingly. The principal should also work together with the SMT and senior teachers to ensure that discipline is managed effectively (Principal 4).
- The principal participates in any activity and committee in the school to see what is happening and assist where necessary

and give guidelines where needed (Principal 1). This implies that the principal should act as an overseer. The presence of the principal plays a vital role as educators will be more motivated in executing their duties (Principal 2).

- A principal supports all educators, avoids favouritism and this will assist him/her in managing the school effectively. Educators will be willing to assist, for instance if there is an educator who is doing something wrong they will advise him/her and if they are unable to solve the problem, they will inform you as the principal (Principal 1). The principal should support the educators in whatever they do (Principal 2).
- A principal supports his/her learners in all activities done at school, for instance sporting activities and SCO and must not distance him/herself from whatever is happening at school. If you show interest as the principal, learners start to value their participation (Principal 1).
- It is also the duty of the principal to know learners within his/her territory. If the learners realise that the principal knows them, they become more disciplined and they become happy because the principal knows them (Principal 1).
- The duty of the principal is to give support, to monitor and give guidance with regard to discipline in the school (Principal 2).
- The principal should, among others, encourage teamwork (Principal 1).

4.7.3 Roles of the disciplinary committee

The Disciplinary committee is constituted by the governing body and persons with legal expertise within the school. This committee is appointed by the governing body and it is usually elected annually. Even though the committee can consist of members within and outside the governing body, it is procedurally vital that a member of the governing body chairs the committee with the intention of reporting the proceedings of the committee during governing body meetings. The disciplinary committee of the governing body becomes involved in cases where serious misconduct has been committed (Joubert and Bray 2007:86). Although this disciplinary committee often only becomes involved when suspension or expulsion may occur, Roos (2003:115), as cited in Joubert and Bray (2007:86), mentions that the disciplinary committee *“should not be limited to impose only these two types of disciplinary sanctions”*.

In this study the following roles of the disciplinary committee were identified:

- If the problem is major it is referred to the committee because *“if we don’t involve them they may distance themselves from what is happening”*. They deal with major problems (Principal 1).
- They are the ones who conduct disciplinary hearings. They are the first ones to interrogate the learner to find out what is happening. From the outcome of the meeting with the learner, the parents will then be informed or invited to school to discuss the matter. They will then report to the management and educators on the outcome of the disciplinary hearing (Principal 2).

- If a learner has transgressed against the school's Code of Conduct, the learner is referred to the disciplinary committee (Educator 2 in School B).
- Their main role is to implement the code of conduct and the disciplinary procedures to ensure that all measures and policies are adhered to. In case there are some transgressions, they are in charge of going through all the disciplinary processes (Principal 3).
- All cases are referred to the committee. There are cases which are regular and they are handled by the class educators and monitored by the committee. There are other cases where decisions should be taken by the office so such cases are handled directly by the office (Principal 4).

It is very important that all stakeholders work together to address the problem of discipline in schools. This will ensure cooperation and effective communication throughout the entire system.

4.8 SUMMARY

This chapter has analysed and interpreted the data from the respective respondents who were involved in the study. The chapter has also provided the results and the findings of the empirical investigation as presented by participants in their direct, unaltered words. Furthermore, it has provided a discussion of the research findings which addressed the main aims of this project. These will be detailed in the following chapter. Furthermore, data on managing discipline in secondary schools has been discussed and explained to link the main research questions of this research

project and its aims. These will also be clearly explained in the next chapter.

The final chapter will outline the summary, conclusion and recommendations of the study. Limitations of this study will also be highlighted.

CHAPTER FIVE

5. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 INTRODUCTION

The previous chapter was used for data analysis and interpretation as well as to discuss the findings of the research. Data collected through interviews and observations was comprehensively discussed.

This chapter intends to discuss general conclusions and provide viable recommendations on how schools could improve the management of discipline within the parameters of human rights. Based on the data collected, conclusions are drawn on this research project. The limitations of the study are also highlighted.

In this chapter, I will also refer to the previous chapters to assist in reaching conclusions about the research findings and providing some feasible recommendations.

5.2 GENERAL CONCLUSIONS

This research study intended to investigate constructive ways of managing discipline in secondary schools within Sekhukhune district. The research study intended to provide suggestions and recommendations that will hopefully change the attitudes of educators and principals towards the management of discipline. It also intended to highlight various positive methods or strategies which educators and principals can adopt to manage discipline effectively in the absence of corporal punishment. I believe and hope that through this research schools might eventually be determined to manage discipline effectively and efficiently. Above

all, this research project aimed to explicitly highlight the roles of educators and principals in discipline management.

Therefore, to achieve these aims, the following questions were addressed:

The main research question:

How can secondary schools in Sekhukhune district manage discipline in a post-corporal punishment environment?

The sub-questions:

- *What positive discipline practices are used in secondary schools within Sekhukhune district?*
- *What role can educators and the principal play in the management of discipline in secondary schools within Sekhukhune district?*
- *How can schools manage discipline without violating the rights of learners in secondary schools within Sekhukhune district?*

This research study was therefore conducted with both principals and educators in an attempt to answer these questions. So, the anticipated questions were attended to through interviews and observations. Since this study involved discipline in a working place, it was of the outmost importance to highlight and discuss the importance of school discipline.

5.2.1 Importance of school discipline

In terms of the research conducted, school discipline is a form of discipline appropriate for highlighting rules and regulations for learners and ensuring order in schools. So, effective and efficient management of discipline in schools leads to effective teaching and learning. This will automatically anticipate good learner

performance. The research has revealed that lack of discipline and safety in schools has become one of the major challenges in South Africa. Therefore, creating and maintaining a safe, disciplined school environment was identified as the most crucial issue in schools.

Through this research it has become apparent that poor discipline impacts negatively on learners' academic performance. Managing discipline in schools is therefore of the outmost importance to allow effective teaching and learning. Moreover, the management of discipline in schools is central to effective teaching and learning.

According to Von Wildemann (2011: 9), school discipline is central to the forming of an independent, self-reliant and responsible society. Therefore, discipline assists learners to acquire positive characteristics such as self-control, self-discipline and accountability. The research has also revealed the goals of discipline, which are to motivate a learner to:

- stop disruptive behaviours;
- adopt productive behaviours; and
- have a desire to cooperate.

5.2.2 Respondents' perceptions on alternatives to corporal punishment

Educators displayed diverse understanding on alternatives to corporal punishment, especially on their effectiveness. As a researcher, I also found it crucial to apprehend respondents' perceptions on alternatives to corporal punishment to allow me draw conclusions and provide feasible recommendations.

- The respondents maintain that there is a need for a systematic plan and thorough research on the abolition of corporal punishment. This implies that the introduction of alternative methods to corporal punishment was done haphazardly without proper planning. Apparently, educators and principals find it difficult to apply those methods.
- The respondents were 100% aware that corporal punishment is outlawed in South African schools, but it is apparent that their problem is that there was insufficient training and in most cases there was no training at all on the alternatives to corporal punishment.
- Educators and principals have diverse understanding of alternatives to corporal punishment. It emerged from the results that the effectiveness of these disciplinary procedures depends on the types of learners; the type of environment where the school is situated; and how parents instil discipline at home.
- In Section 4.2.1 it is indicated that alternatives to corporal punishment were not well defined. So, it is crucial that the government should establish common methods of managing discipline for schools to apply common ways of managing discipline.
- According to the respondents, alternatives to corporal punishment are time consuming. It is evident that these disciplinary measures are taxing because educators are compelled to leave learners who need their assistance and concentrate on learners with disciplinary problems.

5.2.3 Positive practices of managing discipline

This research study has achieved its main aim, namely *to investigate ways of managing discipline in secondary schools within Sekhukhune district, in a post-corporal punishment environment*; so, after conducting this investigation, I identified positive ways of managing discipline. Various alternatives were mentioned, some of which the respondents found to be ineffective.

The manual “*Alternatives to corporal punishment*” clearly outlines disciplinary measures to be employed when dealing with misconduct at different levels (cf. 2.7.3):

- verbal warnings;
- community service;
- demerits – losing credits which have already been gained;
- additional work which is constructive and which possibly relates to the misconduct;
- small menial tasks like tidying up the classroom;
- detention in which learners use their time constructively, but within the confines of the classroom, i.e. they cannot participate in extra-mural activities or go home.
- disciplinary talk with the learner;
- talks with learner’s parents or guardians;
- written warnings;
- signing contract with the learner who agrees to improve;
- daily report taken by the learner and signed by all educators;
- performing duties that improve the school environment such as cleaning, gardening or administrative tasks.
- written warning of the possibility of suspension from the school;
- referral to a counsellor or social worker;
- community service, once permission is granted by the provincial education department.

- referral of the learner to an outside agency for counselling;
- application to the provincial education department for limited suspension from all school activities.
- application to the provincial education department for expulsion or transfer of the learner from the school;
- allow for criminal or civil prosecutions which may follow, given that the misconduct is of a criminal nature.

In Section 4.5.1 alternative methods of discipline were also identified by the respondents. These methods are: inviting parents to school; giving learners lighter work, e.g. sweeping, picking up papers; detention; extra work given; verbal warning; a written reprimand; mentorship; sworn statement; involving disciplinary committee; exclusion from other activities; public confession; suspension; and inviting stakeholders to give motivational talks. Although these methods were mentioned, some are regarded as ineffective. This implies that some methods of discipline are valued more than others.

Section 4.6.1 states that the Code of Conduct is the legal instrument regulating the maintenance of discipline in the school. Therefore, it is important for schools to have rules to regulate the behaviour of the learners. This will assist in solving the disciplinary problems that are experienced by the schools.

Disciplinary problems can be curbed in secondary schools if the schools ensure:

- a safe environment and proper security (cf. 2.7.2 & 4.6.7)
- good classroom management (cf. 2.7.2)
- good educator–learner relationship (cf. 2.7.2 & 4.6.4)
- good curriculum (cf. 2.7.2)
- involving parents (cf. 2.7.2 & 4.6.5)
- that learners are encouraged to develop self–control and self–discipline (cf. 4.6.3)

- good communication amongst all stakeholders (cf. 4.6.6)

5.2.4 Possible or suggested strategies that can promote positive behaviour in schools

(Cf. Sections 2.7.1 and 4.6.2)

- ***Awarding certificates and trophies for work well done and good behaviour.*** This will undoubtedly assist learners to improve and sustain their good behaviour. Learners tend to become motivated when they are recognised.
- ***Involving learners in making the school rules, e.g. developing the Code of Conduct and establishing the classroom rules.*** By involving learners in rule-making, learners will realise that their contributions are valued. So, this will automatically appeal for their cooperation and voluntary participation in rule-making.
- ***Motivation, e.g. praising and encouraging them.*** Learners become more determined if they are praised, encouraged and motivated for work well done. Other learners will also strive to achieve that.
- ***Adults (educators, parents, principal) modelling and explaining positive behaviour.*** Children learn by imitating people, especially adults. So, it is most crucial that all adults model good behaviour. Therefore, learners will more easily be able to acquire good behaviour.
- ***Introduction of various sporting activities.*** Since children like exploring, each should be encouraged to take part in two or more activities. If various sporting activities can be

introduced, learners will be maximally and fully engaged every day. This will then assist in minimising disciplinary problems in schools.

- ***Encouraging learners to join religious organisations within the school, for instance the SCO, etc.*** By joining these religious organisations, learners will be spiritually empowered. Some learners will certainly be well behaved.
- ***A variety of rewards for positive behaviour, including lunch with a friend, homework passes, free time in the gym, or a chance to read outside.*** These practises will assist to improve learner behaviour in schools. Every learner will be encouraged to be well behaved so that he/she can qualify for such a reward.
- ***Respecting rights as a reciprocal process for learners to understand the importance of respecting other people's rights.*** Learners should be taught to respect other peoples' rights and educators should also respect the learners' rights. This will make learners understand the importance of respecting other people's rights.

Should these crucial strategies be applied at schools, learners are likely to redirect their behaviour for good cause. Ultimately learners' behaviour will improve significantly because the main focus will be on positive mechanisms. Since effective discipline management is central to effective teaching and learning, improvement in learner performance could be anticipated.

5.3 RECOMMENDATIONS TO IMPROVE DISCIPLINE MANAGEMENT IN SCHOOLS

- If possible, all secondary schools should be turned into boarding schools with learners going home during the holidays. In that way we will help to bring about a strong and proper discipline. However, there are limitations involved in this suggestion, one of which is the amount of money it would require to accomplish this mission (for hiring hostel staff, cooking staff, security guards) and money for other logistics involved. So, the problem might be the economic status of our country.
- Safety in schools is a precondition for good discipline. So, all schools should be properly fenced and have tight security. A system which is used to detect all unwanted materials within the school should be installed for the safety of everyone within the school premises. This will eliminate disciplinary problems related to dangerous weapons, drugs, alcohol etc.
- The manual “Alternatives to corporal punishment” should be reviewed, based on the research that has been conducted. Then common ways of managing discipline in secondary schools should be identified and promoted.
- All educators and principals should be thoroughly trained on how to handle or manage discipline in their schools.
- After this massive training the department should organise follow-up training for novice educators at the beginning of every year. Most significantly, a course in school discipline can be incorporated in the curriculum of education students.

- Schools should also be advised to hold workshops on discipline every year to remind themselves of the methods of discipline and to reinforce what they employ with what they have learnt from other schools.
- Principals are advised to initiate and organise school-based workshops on disciplinary measures whereby the manual *“Alternatives to corporal punishment”* could be discussed and understood by all educators as a starting point.
- The government should come up with common explicitly defined methods of discipline, not just guidelines. This should explain common and, most importantly, feasible ways of managing discipline in schools.
- Discipline structures must be established in each and every school which will deal with discipline only. In the structure a psychologist must be included. Managing discipline in schools is time consuming. So educators’ basic role must be teaching and nothing else. In that way schools would produce high-quality results. They would be able to concentrate more on learners with learning barriers after school than on dealing with detention of undisciplined learners.
- Teamwork and consistency could assist in managing discipline.
- The issue of managing discipline should be communicated amongst all stakeholders within the school. All stakeholders within the school should discuss ways of managing discipline within their school and the methods identified must conform to human rights.

- Discipline should be dealt with at different levels within the school. For instance, the chain of discipline can range from Class representatives to the community (or parents) as follows: Class Representatives → RCL → Class educators → Mentor educators → Disciplinary committee → Principal → SGB → the community (or parents). However, schools need not be compelled to adhere to the suggested hierarchy even though all mentioned structures are equally valued for managing discipline. The hierarchical structure may vary from school to school.
- It is imperative that all stakeholders should join forces in managing discipline in schools.
- From my observation I could notice that there is lack of communication between the school management and educators on the issue of discipline. So, all schools should ensure good communication amongst all stakeholders on the issue of discipline.
- Schools are no safer for both learners and educators because some learners bring dangerous objects to school (cf. 4.3.1.6) due to lack of proper security. So, proper security needs to be introduced in all schools (cf. 4.6.7).
- Human Rights education should be emphasised to promote positive behaviour and to prevent either the contravention or overemphasis of rights.

5.4 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

- The study was mainly concerned with positive practices of managing discipline in secondary schools. The research study was conducted in four schools only. So, for future research more schools could be included to gather information on the management of discipline in secondary schools.
- The research was limited to schools in one District in Limpopo. Further studies which include more respondents should be done.
- The study concentrated on the views of the educators and the principals only. For future research the community, parents, SGB and learners could be included to air their views on how to improve discipline in schools.
- The findings and conclusions of the study relied only on the data supplied by educators and principals.
- Further research is recommended to look deeper into positive practices for managing discipline in secondary schools, not only in Sekhukhune but also in other districts within the province and other provinces.
- Responsibilities of other stakeholders in managing discipline could also be researched to assist all persons involved in managing discipline to realise their major roles or responsibilities.
- Since discipline and safety are burning issues in South African schools it will be proper if the issue of how security can be

reinforced in schools for the safety of both educators and learners could be investigated comprehensively.

5.5 SUMMARY

This study focused on ways of managing discipline in secondary schools. The study was conducted in four secondary schools within Sekhukhune District in Limpopo Province. Data was collected through interviews and observations. The roles of the principal, educators and the disciplinary committee were also highlighted. Various ways of managing discipline within the parameters of human rights were explicitly discussed.

In this final chapter, conclusions were drawn to provide a synopsis of the entire study. Recommendations were made to assist educators and principals on the ideas that could be adopted to reinforce management of discipline in schools. Recommendations and possible topics for future research were specified.

Finally, limitations of the study were stipulated. Nevertheless, these limitations certainly did not in any way influence the entire research study. The research study achieved what it intended to achieve.

5.6 CONCLUDING REMARKS

Managing discipline in schools is a complex task for both principals and educators. Through this research I have learnt that it is important to take all stakeholders on board on the issue of discipline in schools. I therefore find it imperative to involve the whole community in the process of discipline management. Hopefully, the community might come up with pioneering ways to assist principals and educators to promote discipline in their

schools. Moreover, good discipline is central to effective teaching and learning because a lack of discipline can jeopardise the school's efficacy.

Finally, I would like to emphasise that a lack of discipline in schools has escalated to such an extent that educators and learners have brutally lost their lives at an alarming rate. The Department of Education maintains that "education is a pre-condition for development". This is absolutely true, but if these dramatic events prevail in our schools due to a lack of discipline, how can this development be possible? I therefore recommend that the process of minimising or eradicating deficient discipline in schools be given undivided attention. Furthermore, to succeed as a country we need to invest more in education which in itself involves discipline. Therefore, school discipline is crucial in South African schools to assist in producing well-disciplined and responsible citizens.

REFERENCES

- Adams-Anthony, PC 2004, *An investigation into learner discipline at Silverlea primary schools*, M-Tech Thesis, Cape Technikon.
- Babbie, E & Mouton, J 2010, *The practice of social research*, 10th edn, Oxford, Cape Town.
- Badenhorst, C 2010, *Dissertation writing: a research journey*, 2nd edn, Van Schaick, Pretoria.
- Bear, GG, Cavalier, AR & Manning, MA 2005, *Developing self discipline and correcting misbehaviour*, Pearson, Boston.
- Blandford, S 1998, *Managing discipline in schools*, Routledge, London.
- Boyce, C & Neale, P. 2006. Pathfinder International Tool Series. *Conducting in-depth interviews: a guide for designing and conducting in-depth interviews for evaluation input*, [online] Available at: <http://www.esf-agentschap.be/uploadedFiles/>.
- Bray, E 2005, 'Codes of conduct in public schools: a legal perspective', *South African Journal of Education*, vol.25, no. 3, pp.133-138.
- Charles, CM 2007, *Today's best classroom management strategies: Paths to positive discipline*, Pearson, Boston.
- Cohen, L, Manion, L & Morrison, K 2008, *Research methods in education*, 6th edn, Routledge, London.

- Cregor, M 2008, 'Teaching tolerance: the building blocks of positive behaviour', *Education Digest*, vol.74, no. 4pp. 31-35.
- Creswell, JW 2009, *Research design: qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches*, 3rd edn, Sage, London.
- De Vos, AS 2003, 'Qualitative data analysis and interpretation', in CSL Delport, AS De Vos, CB Fouche' & H Strydom(eds), *Research at grass roots*, Van Schaik, Pretoria.
- Department of Education and Early Childhood Development, 2009, *Human resource: roles and responsibilities – principal and teacher class*, State of Victoria, Melbourne.
- Department of Education, 2000, *Alternatives to corporal punishment: the learning experience*, Department of Education, Pretoria.
- Department of education, 2007, *Learner discipline and school management: a practical guide to understanding and managing learner behaviour within the school context*, Western Cape Department of Education, Education Management and Development Centre: Metropole North.
- Douglas, EM & Straus MA 2007, 'Discipline by parents and child psychopathology', in AR Felthous & H Sass(eds), *International handbook of psychopathology and the law*, Chapter 18, Wiley, New York.
- Dreikurs, R, Cassel, P & Ferguson ED 2004, *Discipline without tears: how to reduce conflict and establish cooperation in the classroom*, Wiley, Canada.

- Fouche'. CB & Delport CSL 2003, 'Introduction to research process', in CSL Delport, AS De Vos, CB Fouche' & H Strydom(eds), *Research at grass roots*, Van Schaik, Pretoria.
- Gaustad, J 1991, 'Schools respond to gangs and violence', *Oregon School Study Council (OSSC) Bulletin*, vol.34, no. 9, pp. 1-54.
- Gilbert, N 2008, *Researching social life*, 3rd edn, Sage, London.
- Goodman, JF 2006, 'School discipline in moral disarray', *Journal of Moral Education*, vol.35, no.2, pp. 213-230.
- Greeff, M 2003, 'Information collection: interviewing', in CSL Delport, AS De Vos, CB Fouche' & H Strydom(eds), *Research at grass roots*. Van Schaik, Pretoria.
- Harper, K, Horno, P, Landsdown, G, Martin, F, Newell, P & Nilsson M 2005, 'Ending Physical and humiliating punishment of children: manual for action', *Save the children*, Stockholm, Sweden.
- Hill, MS & Hill, FW 1994, *Creating safe schools*, Corwin, United Kingdom.
- Jackson, M 1991, *Discipline: An approach for teachers and parents*, Longman Cheshire, Melbourne.
- Joubert, R & Bray E (eds) 2007, *Public school governance in South Africa*, Centre for Education Law and Education Policy (CELP), Pretoria.

- Joubert, R, De Waal, E & Rossouw JP 2005, 'A South African perspective on the impact of discipline on access to equal educational opportunities', in CJ Russo, J Backmann & JD Jansen(eds), *Equal educational opportunities: comparative perspectives in education law*, Van Schaik, Pretoria.
- Koenig, LJ 2008, *Smart discipline for the classroom: respect and cooperation restored*, 4th edn, Corwin Press, Thousand Oaks.
- Kruger, AG 1996, 'Classroom management', in DC Badenhorst(ed) *School management: the task and the role of the teacher*, Kagiso Publishers, Pretoria.
- Kupchik, A 2010, *Homeroom security: school discipline in an age of fear*, New York University Press, New York.
- Le Mottee, S 2005, *Avoiding polarisation-building healthy relationships at school by developing approaches to school discipline which build a culture of learning and teaching* (online). Paper presented at the national Union of Educators Conference. Available at: <http://www.eisa.org.za/EISA/education/slm2005.htm>.
- Le Roux, L 2005, 'An educators' view: opinion', vol. 1, no.3, p. 7.
- Leaman, L 2005, *Managing very challenging behaviour*, Continuum International Publishing Group, New York.
- Legotlo, MW, Maaga, MP, Sebego, MG, Van der Westhuizen, PC, Mosoge, MJ, Nieuwoudt, HD & Steyn HJ 2002, 'Perceptions of stakeholders on causes of poor performance in Grade 12 in a province in South Africa', *South African Journal of Education*, vol.22, no. 2, pp. 113-118.

- Lekalakala, PS 2007, *The role of the school governing body in implementing a code of conduct for learners in secondary schools in North West Province*, MEd dissertation, University of South Africa.
- Lekganyane, SA 2011, *Managing learner misconduct in Ntoane village secondary schools*, MEd dissertation, University of South Africa.
- Lemmer, E & Van Wyk, N 2004, 'Home-school communication in South African primary schools', *South African Journal of Education*, vol. 24, no. 3, pp. 183-188.
- Mabitla, MA 2006, *Causes and manifestation of aggression among secondary school learners*, MEd dissertation, University of South Africa.
- Maphosa, C & Shumba, A 2010, 'Educators' disciplinary capabilities after banning of corporal punishment in South African schools', *South African Journal of Education*, vol.30, no. 3, pp.387-399.
- Masekoameng, MC 2010, *The impact of disciplinary problems on educator morale in secondary schools and implications for management*, MEd dissertation, University of South Africa.
- Masitsa, G 2008, 'Discipline and disciplinary measures in the Free State township schools: unresolved problems', *Acta academica*, vol.40, no.3, pp. 234-270.
- Matoti, SN 2010, 'The unheard voices of educators: perceptions of educators about the state of education in South Africa', *South African Journal of Higher Education*, Vol. 24, no. 4, pp. 568-584.

- Mavetera, N & Kroeze, JH 2009, *Practical considerations in grounded theory research*, Sprouts: Working Papers on Information Systems, 9(32).<http://sprouts.aisnet.org/9-32>.
- McMillan, JH & Schumacher, S 2006, *Research in education: evidence-based inquiry*, 6th edn, Pearson, Boston.
- McMillan, JH & Schumacher, S 2010, *Research in education: evidence-based inquiry*, 7th edn, Pearson, Boston.
- Mendler, BD, Curwin, RL & Mendler, AN 2008, *Strategies for successful classroom management: helping students succeed without losing your dignity or sanity*, Corwin Press, Thousand Oaks.
- Merrill, B & West, L 2009, *Using biographical methods in social research*, Sage, London.
- Mkhize, DE 2002, *Impact of discipline on learner performance*, MEd dissertation, University of Zululand.
- Mokhele, PR 2006, 'The teacher-learner relationship in the management of discipline in public high schools', *Africa Education Review*, vol.3, no.1&2, pp. 148-159.
- Mouton, J 1996, *Understanding social research*, Van Schaik, Pretoria.
- Mouton, J 2008, *How to succeed in your master's and doctoral studies*, 12th edn, Van Schaik, Pretoria.
- Mtsweni, J 2008, *The role of educators in the management of school discipline in the Nkangala Region of Mpumalanga*, MEd dissertation, University of South Africa.

- Naong, M 2007, 'The impact of the abolition of corporal punishment on teacher morale: 1994-2004', *South African Journal of Education*, vol. 27, no. 2, pp. 283-300.
- Ndamani, PL 2008, 'Factors contributing to lack of discipline in selected secondary schools in the Mangaung Area of Bloemfontein and possible solutions', *Interim: Interdisciplinary Journal*, vol. 7, no. 2, pp. 177-197.
- Neuman, 2006, *Social research methods: qualitative and quantitative approaches*, 6th edn, Pearson, Boston.
- Olley, RI, Cohn, A & Cowan, KC 2010, 'Promoting safe schools and academic success: moving your school from punitive discipline to effective discipline', *National Association of School Psychologists*, vol. 39, no. 1, pp. 7-8.
- Oosthuizen, IJ 2010, *A practical guide to discipline in schools*, Van Schaik, Pretoria.
- Oosthuizen, LC 2009, *The role of school management teams in selected Northern areas schools in Port Elizabeth in creating a culture of discipline and order*, MEd dissertation, Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University.
- Papalia, DE, Wendkos-Olds, S & Duskin-feldman, R 2006, *Child's world: Infancy through adolescence*, 10th edn, Mc Graw-Hill, New York.
- Porter, L 2004, *Behaviour in schools: Theory and practice for teachers*, Open University Press, Maidenhead.
- Porter, L 2007, *Behaviour in schools: Theory and practice for teachers*, 2nd edn, Open University Press, Maidenhead.

Prinsloo, IJ 2005, 'How safe are South African schools?', *South African Journal of Education*, vol.25, no. 1, pp.5-10.

Ragin, CC & Amoroso, LM 2011, *Sociology for a new century: Constructing social research*, 2nd edn, SAGE: Pine Forge Press, London.

Rammala, MS 2009, *Factors contributing towards poor performance on grade 12 learners*, MEd dissertation, University of Limpopo.

Republic of South Africa, 1996, *South African Schools Act 84 of 1996*, (*Government Gazette* of 15 November 1996, no 17579), Government Printer, Pretoria.

Republic of South Africa, 1996, *South African Schools Act 84 of 1996*, (*Government Gazette* of 19 September 2011, no 34620), Government Printer, Pretoria.

Republic of South Africa, 1996a, *Constitution of the Republic of South Africa 108 of 1996*, (*Government Gazette* of 18 December 1996, no 17678), Government Printer, Pretoria.

Republic of South Africa, 1998, *Government Notice 776 of 1998, Guidelines for the consideration of governing bodies in adopting a code of conduct for learner*, (*Government Gazette* of 15 May 1998, no 18900), Government Printer, Pretoria.

Rogers, B 1998, *You know the fair rule: strategies for making the hard job of discipline*, Pitman, London.

Rogers, B 2002, *Teacher leadership and behaviour management*, Paul Chapman Publishing, London.

- Roos, R 2003, 'The legal nature of schools, codes of conduct and disciplinary proceedings in schools', *Koers: Bulletin for Christian Scholarship*, vol. 68, no. 4, pp. 449-520.
- Rooth, E 2005, *An investigation of the status and practice of Life Orientation in South African schools in two provinces*, PhD thesis, University of the Western Cape.
- Rosen, L 2005, *School discipline: best practices for administrators*, 2nd edn, Corwin Press, Thousand Oaks.
- Ruane, JM. 2008, *Essentials of research methods: A guide to Social Science research*, Blackwell Publishing, Victoria.
- Singh, P, Mbokodi, SM & Msila VT 2004, 'Black parental involvement in education', *South African Journal of Education*, vol. 24, no. 4, pp. 301-307.
- Soneson, U 2005, *Ending corporal punishment of children in South Africa: I want her to talk with me when I make a mistake*, Save the children Sweden. Pretoria.
- Squelch, JM 2000, *Discipline*, Centre for Education Law and Education Policy (CELP), Pretoria.
- Straus, MA 2000, 'Corporal punishment and primary prevention of physical abuse', *Child Abuse & Neglect: The International Journal*, vol. 24, no.9, pp 1109-1114.
- Subbiah, C 2004, *The role of learners in the management of discipline in urban secondary schools in KwaZulu – Natal*, MEd dissertation, University of South Africa.

- Van der Westhuizen, PC 1991, *Effective educational management*, Kagiso Tertiary, Pretoria.
- Van Schalkwyk, OJ 1986, *Educational system: Theory and practice*, Educo Publishers, Alkantrant.
- Von Wildemann, A 2011, *Philosophies that inform discipline strategies among teachers*, MEd dissertation, Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University.
- Wagner, PJ 1992, *Building support networks for schools*, ABC-CLIO, Santa Barbara.
- Walsh, K 1991. *Discipline for character development*. Alabama: R.E.P Books, Birmingham.
- Westwood, P 1995, 'Learner and teacher: perhaps the most important partnership of all', *Australasian Journal of Special Education*, vol. 19, no. 1, pp 5-16.
- Young, PG 2008, *Promoting positive behaviours: an elementary principal's guide to structuring the learning environment*, Corwin Press, Thousand Oaks.

APPENDIX A

INFORMED CONSENT

MANAGING DISCIPLINE IN A POST-CORPORAL PUNISHMENT ERA ENVIRONMENT AT SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN THE SEKHUKHUNE SCHOOL DISTRICT, LIMPOPO

I Ntuli Lesheleba Tiny (082 436 6717 / 082 493 6597), a Masters student under the supervision of Dr P.R Machaisa (012 429 4560 (w) / 083)338 4469 (h)) at University of South Africa (UNISA), is engaged in a research project on discipline in secondary schools. The purpose of this research is to investigate constructive ways of managing discipline in secondary schools. For the purpose of this research all principals of the four purposefully selected schools and six educators from each school will participate in the research.

I confirm that I have explained the subsequent elements of informed consent to the participant:

- The participant knows that their participation is voluntary, and that they do not need to answer all questions.
- The purpose of the research as well as the risks and benefits have been explained.
- The procedures as well as the time commitment have been outlined.
- The participant understands issues of confidentiality.
- The participant understands that there is no compensation involved.

I, the participant in this study, have been informed on the following crucial matters:

- I shall be given a copy of this informed consent form to keep.
- Participation in this research study is voluntary.
- I am free to decline to participate in this research study, or I may withdraw my participation at any point without penalty.
- I may choose not to answer specific questions.
- The information gathered from this study will be kept as confidential as possible. My real name will not be used in the report and all files, transcripts and data will be stored in a locked cabinet in the researcher's home, and no one except the researcher will have access to them. My name will not be used and any identifying personal information will be avoided.
- My signature below means that I voluntarily agree to participate in this research study.

Participant's signature: _____ Date: _____

Researcher's signature: _____ Date: _____

APPENDIX B

INTERVIEW SCHEDULE FOR EDUCATORS

1. What is your opinion on alternatives to corporal punishment?
2. Were you trained on alternative methods to corporal punishment?
3. If yes, for how long? If no, how did these alternatives to corporal punishment come to your attention?
4. Do parents in your school show interest on their children's education? Motivate your answer.
5. Which learner disciplinary problems does your school experience?
6. In your opinion what causes these disciplinary problems?
7. How do you ensure that disciplinary problems are reduced in your school?
8. How do learners with disciplinary problems perform at your school?
9. Which methods do you employ to correct misbehaviours in your school?
10. Which methods do you find effective in correcting misbehaviours and why do you consider them effective?

11. Which methods do you find ineffective and why do you find them ineffective?
12. How do you promote positive behaviour in your school?
13. Which preventative measures do you employ at your school to encourage learners to develop self-control and self discipline?
14. What role do you play as an educator regarding school discipline?

APPENDIX C

INTERVIEW SCHEDULE FOR PRINCIPALS

1. What is your attitude on alternatives to corporal punishment?
2. What role do you play as a school principal in terms of school discipline?
3. How do you relate with your educators to ensure that discipline is managed effectively in your school.
4. Who was involved in the drafting of the code of conduct? What role did parents have and how does that assist in maintaining discipline at your school?
5. Do you have a disciplinary committee in your school and what role does it play in managing discipline?
6. How are the parents assisting the school in disciplining ill-behaved learners?
7. How do you communicate with your learners' parents with regards to learners' problems at school? Does this assist in solving problems that you might have with your learners?
8. How do you rate the importance of communication in discipline?
9. Which preventative measures do you employ at your school to encourage learners to develop self-control and self discipline?

10. How do you promote positive behaviour in your school?

11. How do you ensure that disciplinary problems are reduced in your school?

APPENDIX D

P.O. Box 1451
GROBLERSDAL
0470
Date

The District Senior Manager
Department of Education
Sekhukhune District

Sir/Madam

PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH

I am a Masters student at the University of South Africa (UNISA) and engaged in a research project in secondary schools in the Sekhukhune District. My research study is entitled: **“MANAGING DISCIPLINE IN A POST-CORPORAL PUNISHMENT ERA ENVIRONMENT AT SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN THE SEKHUKHUNE SCHOOL DISTRICT, LIMPOPO”**.

The aim of my research is to investigate effective ways of managing discipline in secondary schools.

The principals and educators of secondary schools within Sekhukhune District will form part of the research. Therefore, I humbly request a permission to conduct this research.

You are further assured that data collected during the investigation will be highly confidential and will only be used for the purpose of my research.

For further information about this study, please contact my supervisor, Dr P.R Machaisa, at this number: (012) 429 4560 (w) / (083)338 4469 (h) / Fax2email: 086 582 4740.

Thanking you in anticipation.

Yours Faithfully

NTULI L.T (Student no: 3087-262-6)

Dr P.R Machaisa

(SUPERVISOR)

APPENDIX E

P.O. Box 1451
GROBLERSDAL
0470
Date

The Principal
Department of Education
Sekhukhune District

Sir/Madam

PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH

I am a Masters student at the University of South Africa (UNISA) and engaged in a research project in secondary schools in the Sekhukhune District. My research study is entitled: **“MANAGING DISCIPLINE IN A POST-CORPORAL PUNISHMENT ERA ENVIRONMENT AT SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN THE SEKHUKHUNE SCHOOL DISTRICT, LIMPOPO”**.

The aim of my research is to investigate effective ways of managing discipline in secondary schools.

The Department of Education has approved the administration of this research. Your school has been chosen to form part of the study. I therefore request permission to conduct this research.

You are further assured that data collected during the investigation will be highly confidential and will only be used for the purpose of my research.

For further information about this study, please contact my supervisor, Dr P.R Machaisa, at this number: (012) 429 4560 (w) / (073 519 4485 (h) / Fax2email: 086 582 4740.

Thanking you in anticipation.

Yours Faithfully

NTULI L.T (Student no: 3087-262-6)

Dr P.R Machaisa

(SUPERVISOR)

APPENDIX F



LIMPOPO
PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

DEPARTMENT OF
EDUCATION

SEKHUKHUNE DISTRICT

Enq: Mothiba B.O
Tel: 015 633 2902
Date: 04/11/2011

To: Ntuli L.T (Student Med in Education Management)
Education Management
University of South Africa

From: District Senior Manager
Sekhukhune District

SUBJECT: GRANTED PERMISSION TO CONDUCT A RESEARCH.

1. The above matter refers.
2. Kindly be informed that your research application to conduct research in Sekhukhune District, in identified two performing schools and two underperforming schools. The topic of dissertation is **Managing Discipline in a Post- Corporal Punishment Era Environment at Secondary Schools in the Sekhukhune School District, Limpopo**, is approved.
3. Please note you should conduct your research in line with research ethics as prescribed by your institution and international norms and standards for research.
4. The district wishes you well in your project and awaits your findings with great interest.

 Nkadimeng

NKADIMENG T.G

DISTRICT SENIOR MANAGER

04.11.2011

DATE